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J O N E S's

BRITISH THEATRE.

VOL. IV.

CONTAINING,

I.

THE DISTREST MOTHER.

II.

DOUGLAS.

III.

JANE SHORE.

IV.

THE EARL OF ESSEX.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED BY JOHN CHAMBERS,
FOR WILLIAM JONES, No. 86, DAME-STREET.

1795.

BRITISH THEATRE.

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THE DISCOVERY

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Act V.

THE DISTREST MOTHER.

Scene I.



J. G. Kneller sculp.

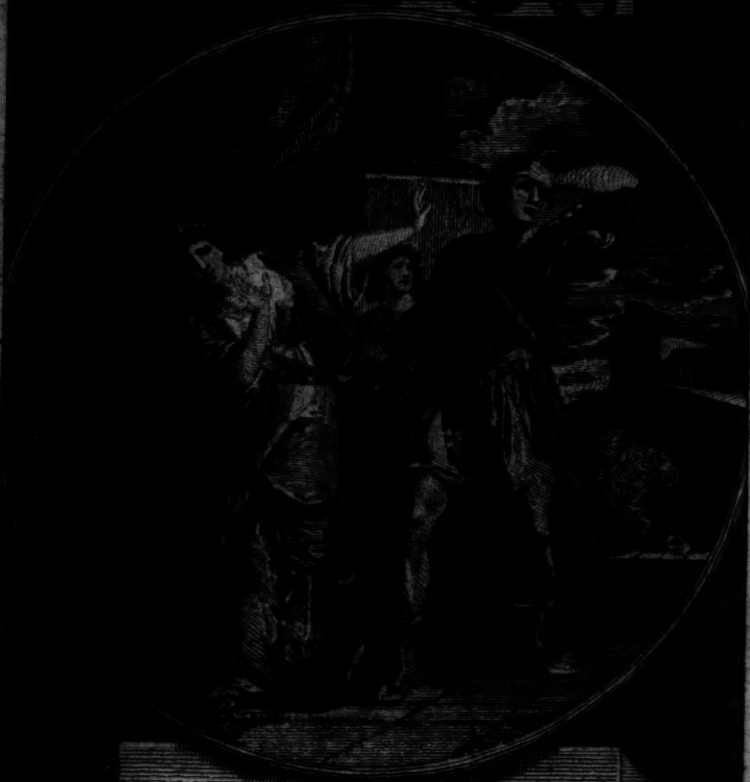
H. Brossa sculp.

M^r FARREN as ORESTES.

*Madam tis done, your orders are obey'd:
The Tyrant lies expiring at the altar.*

Dublin Published by W^m Jones N^o 86 Dame Street.

NO. 12



THE DISTRESSED MOTHER.

*Alas! My son! I know this not thou felt but I can
Feel as you do so great so brave a man
Who sits thus on!*

God! Oh grant me patience Heaven!

Act 1.

Hamilton pin.

Brocas sculp.

Dublin Published by W^o Jones N^o 86 Dame Street.



THE
DISTREST MOTHER,

A
TRAGEDY.

TRANSLATED BY
AMBROSE PHILIPS,
FROM THE ANDROMAQUE OF RACINE.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,
By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

DUBLIN :

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL,
FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCII.

THE
DISTREST MOTHER.

TRAGEDY.

TRANSLATED BY

AMBROSE PHILIPS.

FROM THE ANNOUANCE OF RACINE.



DRURY LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REPRODUCED FROM THE PICTURE-GALLERY.

By George F. W. Johnson.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been named in the above-named work.

PRINTED BY

WILLIAM BAKER, NO. 6, DARTMOUTH STREET, LONDON.

TO
HER GRACE
THE
DUTCHESS OF MONTAGUE.

MADAM,

THIS tragedy, which I do myself the honour to dedicate to your Grace, is formed upon an original, which passes for the most finished piece, in this kind of writing, that has ever been produced in the French language. The principal action and main distress of the play is of such a nature, as seems more immediately to claim the patronage of a lady: And, when I consider the great and shining characters of antiquity, that are celebrated in it, I am naturally directed to inscribe it to a person, whose illustrious father has, by a long series of glorious actions, (for the service of his country, and in defence of the liberties of Europe,) not only surpassed the generals of his own time, but equalled the greatest heroes of former ages. The name of Hector could not be more terrible among the Greeks, than that of the duke of Marlborough has been to the French.

The refined taste you are known to have in all entertainments, for the diversion of the public, and the peculiar life and ornament your presence gives to all assemblies, was no small motive to determine me in the choice of my

patronefs. The charms that fhine out in the perfon of your Grace, may convince every one, that there is nothing unnatural in the power which is afcribed to the beauty of Andromache.

The ftrict regard I have had to decency and good manners throughout this work, is the greateft merit I pretend to plead in favour of my prefumption ; and is, I am fenfible, the only argument that can recommend it moft effectually to your protection.

I am,

with the greateft refpect,

Madam,

your Grace's moft humble

and moft obedient fervant.

AMBROSE PHILIPS.

THE
DISTRESS MOTHER

Is a translation by AMBROSE PHILIPS from the ANDROMAQUE of the great French dramatic poet RACINE. It was acted originally at Drury-Lane Theatre, and first printed in 1712.

To those who confine their admiration to the strong fabrics of our dramatists of the golden age of English poesy, the beginning of the seventeenth century, the prolixity of harangue, and the tedious progression of the action, characteristic of the French drama, are not likely to pass without their usual reprobation. Yet many fine touches of nature considerably enliven the slumber of the stage, and much flow and facility of expression gives to the conveyance of elegant sentiments the dress they best delight to adopt.

The taste of ADDISON seems considerably to have fluctuated.—He naturally, it may be presumed from the selections in the Spectator, loved the gorgeous grandeur of SHAKSPEARE, and the sublime and profound delineations of Milton,—but he deferred too much to the predominant authorities of the French critics. BOILEAU hurried him into a stigma of the Tuscan muse, which even the fairer critics of our own day are scarcely able to supplant—and people

talk of the *tinsel* of TORQUATO TASSO, because ADDISON had seconded the ungrounded censure of BOILEAU. It too frequently happens, that, without the trouble of thought, the deliberation of decision, the herd of smatterers in letters follow the critic BELL-WEATHER, even when he tinkles them from their proper bounds.

ADDISON found this play perfectly consonant with the axioms of his French dogmatizers, and the Spectators were filled with its praises. PHILIPS it was also his pleasure to lift into a rivalry with POPE; and the composition of the MARIAMNE of FENTON, the original author, never wrested such vehemence of praise as the *translation* of PHILIPS from the *original* of RACINE.

I recollect to have seen this piece performed with the powerful support of Mrs. CRAWFORD and Mrs. YATES, and, even then, small was the effect produced upon the heart—The scenes are too cold and declamatory—and the personages are considerable sufferers, by being above our pity and superior to our sympathy.

P R E F A C E.

In all the works of genius and invention, whether in verse or prose, there are in general but three manners of style; the one sublime and full of majesty; the other simple, natural, and easy; and the third, swelling, forced, and unnatural. An injudicious affectation and sublimity is what has betrayed a great many authors into the latter; not considering that real greatness in writing, as well as in manners, consists in an unaffected simplicity. The true sublime does not lie in strained metaphors and the pomp of words, but rises out of noble sentiments and strong images of nature; which will always appear the more conspicuous, when the language does not swell to hide and overshadow them.

These are the considerations that have induced me to write this tragedy in a style very different from what has been usually practised amongst us in poems of this nature. I have had the advantage to copy after a very great master, whose writings are deservedly admired in all parts of Europe, and whose excellencies are too well known to the men of letters in this nation, to stand in need of any farther discovery of them here. If I have been able to keep up to the beauties of Monsieur Racine in my attempts, and to do him no prejudice in the liberties I have taken frequently to vary from so great a poet, I shall have no reason to be dissatisfied with the labour it has cost me to bring the compleatest of his works upon the English stage.

I shall trouble my reader no farther, than to give him some short hints relating to this play, from the preface of the French

author. The following lines of Virgil mark out the scene, the action, and the four principal actors in this tragedy, together with their distinct characters; excepting that of Hermione, whose rage and jealousy is sufficiently painted in the Andromache of Euripides.

*Littoræque Epiri legimus, portuque subimus
Chæonis, et celsam Butbroti ascendimus urbem—
Solemnes tum forte dapes, et tristia dona
Libabat cineri Andromachæ, manesque vocabat
Hæctorum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem,
Et geminas, causam lacrymis, sacraverat aras—
Dejecit vultum, et demissa voce locuta est:
O felix una ante alias Priamæa virgo,
Hostilem ad tumulum, Trojæ sub manibus altis
Jussa mori! quæ sortitus non pestulit ullos,
Nec victoris beri tetigit captiva cubile.
Nos patriâ incensâ, diversa per æquora vectâ,
Stirpis Achillææ fustus, juvenemque superbum,
Servitio enixæ tulimus, qui deinde secutus
Ledaam Hermionem, Lacedæmoniosque hymenæos—
Ast illum erepta magno inflammatus amore
Conjugis, et scelerum Furiis agitata Orestes
Excipit incautum patriasque obtruncat ad aras.*

VIRG. ÆN. Lib. iii.

The great concern of Andromache, in the Greek poet, is for the life of Molossus, a son she had by Pyrrhus. But it is more conformable to the general notion we form of that princess, at this great distance of time, to represent her as the disconsolate widow of Hector, and to suppose her the mother only of Astyanax. Considered in this light, no doubt, she moves our compassion much more effectually, than she could be imagined to do in any distress for a son by a second husband.

In order to bring about this beautiful incident, so necessary to heighten in Andromache the character of a tender mother, an affectionate wife, and a widow full of veneration for the memory of her deceased husband, the life of Astyanax is indeed a little prolonged beyond the term fixed to it by the general consent of the ancient authors. But so long as there is nothing improbable in the supposition, a judicious critic will always be pleased when he finds a matter of fact (especially so far removed in the dark and fabulous ages) falsified, for the embellishment of a whole poem.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. STEELE.

*SINCE fancy by itself is loose and vain,
The wise, by rules, that airy power restrain :
They think those writers mad, who at their ease
Convey this house and audience where they please ;
Who Nature's stated distances confound,
And make this spot all soils the sun goes round :
'Tis nothing, when a fancy'd scene's in view,
To skip from Covent-Garden to Peru.*

*But Shakspeare's self transgress'd ; and shall each elf,
Each pigmy genius, quote great Shakspeare's self !
What critic dares prescribe what's just and fit,
Or mark out limits for such boundless wit !
Shakspeare could travel thro' earth, sea, and air,
And paint out all the powers and wonders there.
In barren desarts he makes Nature smile,
And gives us feasts in his Enchanted Isle.
Our author does his feeble force confess,
Nor dares pretend such merit to transgress ;
Does not such shining gifts of genius share,
And therefore makes propriety his care.*

*Your treat with studied decency he serves ;
Not only rules of time and place preserves,
But strives to keep his character intire,
With French correctness, and with British fire.*

*This piece, presented in a foreign tongue,
When France was glorious, and her monarch young,
An hundred times a crowded audience drew,
An hundred times repeated, still 'twas new.*

*Pyrrhus provok'd, to no wild rants betray'd,
Repents his generous love so ill repay'd ;
Does like a man resent, a prince upbraid.
His sentiments disclose a royal mind,
Nor is he known a king from guards behind.*

*Injur'd Hermione demands relief ;
But not from heavy narratives of grief :
In conscious majesty her pride is shewn ;
Born to avenge her wrongs, but not bemoan.*

*Andromache—If in our author's lines,
As in the great original she shines,
Nothing but from barbarity she fears ;
Attend with silence, you'll applaud with tears.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

PYRRHUS, son of Achilles,	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
PHOENIX, counsellor to Pyrrhus,	-	-	Mr. Packer.
ORESTES, son of Agamemnon,	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
PYLADES, friend to Orestes,	-	-	Mr. Barrymore.

Women.

ANDROMACHE, Hector's widow,	-	-	Miss Kemble.
CEPHISA, confidante to Andromache,	-	-	Miss Tidswell.
HERMIONE, daughter to Menelaus,	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.
CLEONE, confidante to Hermione,	-	-	Miss Collins.

Attendants on Pyrrhus and Orestes, &c.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

PYRRHUS, son of Achilles,	-	-	Mr. Pope.
PHOENIX, counsellor to Pyrrhus,	-	-	Mr. Macready.
ORESTES, son of Agamemnon,	-	-	Mr. Holman.
PYLADES, friend to Orestes,	-	-	Mr. Davies.

Women.

ANDROMACHE, Hector's widow,	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
CEPHISA, confidante to Andromache,	-	-	Mrs. Morton.
HERMIONE, daughter to Menelaus,	-	-	Miss Brunton.
CLEONE, confidante to Hermione,	-	-	Miss Stuart.

Attendants on Pyrrhus and Orestes, &c.

*The SCENE, a great hall in the court of Pyrrhus, at Buthiotos,
the capital city of Epirus.*

THE
DISTREST MOTHER.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Palace of PYRRHUS. Enter ORESTES, PYLADES,
and Attendants.*

Orestes.

OPYLADES ! what's life without a friend !
At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up ;
My hopes revive, and gladness dawns within me.
After an absence of six tedious moons,
How could I hope to find my Pylades,
My joy, my comfort, on this fatal shore ?
Even in the court of Pyrrhus ! in these realms,
These hated realms, so cross to all my wishes.
Oh, my brave friend ! may no blind stroke of fate
Divide us more, and tear me from myself.

Pyl. O prince ! O my Orestes ! O my friend !—
Thus let me speak the welcome of my heart.

[Embracing.]

Since I have gain'd this unexpected meeting,
Blest be the powers who barr'd my way to Greece,
And kept me here ! e'er since the unhappy day
When warring winds (Epirus full in view)
Sunder'd our barks on the loud, stormy main.

Orest. It was, indeed, a morning full of horror !

Pyl. A thousand boding cares have rack'd my soul
In your behalf. Often, with tears, I mourn'd
The fatal ills, in which your life's involv'd ;
And grudg'd you dangers which I could not share.
I fear'd to what extremities the black despair
That prey'd upon your mind, might have betray'd
you,

And lest the gods, in pity to your woes,
Should hear your pray'rs, and take the life you loath'd.
But now with joy I see you !——The retinue,
And numerous followers that surround you here,
Speak better fortunes, and a mind dispos'd
To relish life.

Orest. Alas ! my friend, who knows
The destiny to which I stand reserv'd !
I come in search of an inhuman fair ;
And live or die, as she decrees my fate.

Pyl. You much surprise me, prince !——I thought
you cur'd
Of your unpity'd, unsuccessful passion.
Why, in Epirus, should you hope to find
Hermione less cruel, than at Sparta ?
I thought her pride, and the disdainful manner
In which she treated all your constant sufferings,
Had broke your fetters, and assur'd your freedom :
Asham'd of your repulse, and slighted vows,

You hated her ; you talk'd of her no more :
Prince, you deceiv'd me.

Orest. I deceiv'd myself.

Do not upbraid the unhappy man, that loves thee.
Thou know'st I never hid my passion from thee ;
Thou saw'st it in its birth and in its progress ;
And when at last the hoary king, her father,
Great Menelaus, gave away his daughter,
His lovely daughter, to the happy Pyrrhus,
Th' avenger of his wrongs, thou saw'st my grief,
My torture, my despair ; " and how I dragg'd,
" From sea to sea, a heavy chain of woes."
O Pylades ! my heart has bled within me,
To see thee, prest with sorrows not thy own,
Still wand'ring with me like a banish'd man !
Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched friend,
To temper the wild transports of my mind,
And save me from myself.

Pyl. Why thus unkind ?

Why will you envy me the pleasing task
Of generous love, and sympathizing friendship ?

Orest. Thou miracle of truth—but hear me on.
When in the midst of my disastrous fate,
I thought how the divine Hermione,
Deaf to my vows, regardless of my plaints,
Gave up herself, in all her charms, to Pyrrhus ;
Thou may'st remember, I abhorr'd her name,
Strove to forget her and repay her scorn.
I made my friends, and even myself, believe
My soul was freed. Alas ! I did not see,
That all the malice of my heart was love.
Triumphing thus, and yet a captive still,

In Greece I landed : and in Greece I found
 The assembled princes all alarm'd with fears,
 In which their common safety seem'd concern'd.
 I join'd them : for I hop'd that war and glory
 Might fill my mind, and take up all my thoughts :
 And, that my shatter'd soul, impair'd with grief,
 Once more would reassume its wonted vigour,
 And ev'ry idle passion quit my breast.

Pyl. The thought was worthy Agamemnon's son.

Orest. But see the strange perverseness of my stars,
 Which throws me on the rock I strove to shun !
 The jealous chiefs, and all the states of Greece,
 With one united voice complain of Pyrrhus ;
 That now forgetful of the promise giv'n,
 And mindless of his godlike father's fate,
 Aftyanax, he nurses in his court ;
 Aftyanax, the young, surviving hope
 Of ruin'd Troy ; Aftyanax, descended
 From a long race of kings ; great Hector's son.

Pyl. A name still dreadful in the ears of Greece !
 But, prince, you'll cease to wonder why the child
 Lives thus protected in the court of Pyrrhus,
 When you shall hear, the bright Andromache,
 His lovely captive, charms him from his purpose :
 The mother's beauty guards the helpless son.

Orest. Your tale confirms what I have heard ; and
 hence

Spring all my hopes. Since my proud rival woos
 Another partner to his throne and bed,
 Hermione may still be mine. Her father,
 The injur'd Menelaus, thinks already
 His daughter slighted, and th' intended nuptials.

Too long delay'd. I heard his loud complaints
With secret pleasure ; and was glad to find
Th' ungrateful maid neglected in her turn,
And all my wrongs aveng'd in her disgrace.

Pyl. Oh, may you keep your just resentments
warm !

Orest. Resentments ! Oh, my friend, too soon I
found

They grew not out of hatred ! I'm betray'd :
I practice on myself ; and fondly plot
My own undoing. Goaded on by love,
I canvass'd all the suffrages of Greece :
And here I come their sworn ambassador,
To speak their jealousies, and claim this boy.

Pyl. Pyrrhus will treat your embassy with scorn.
Full of Achilles, his redoubted fire,
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce ;
Made up of passions : Will he then be sway'd,
And give to death the son of her he loves ?

Orest. Oh, would he render up Hermione,
And keep Aftyanax, I should be blest !
He must ; he shall. Hermione is my life,
My soul, my rapture !—I'll no longer curb
The strong desire that hurries me to madness :
I'll give a loose to love ; I'll bear her hence ;
I'll tear her from his arms ; I'll—O, ye gods !
Give me Hermione, or let me die !—
But tell me, Pylades ; how stand my hopes ?
Is Pyrrhus still enamour'd with her charms ?
Or dost thou think he'll yield me up the prize,
The dear, dear prize, which he has ravish'd from
me ?

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond hopes so far ;
 The king, indeed, cold to the Spartan Princess,
 Turns all his passion to Andromache,
 Hector's afflicted widow. But in vain,
 With interwoven love and rage, he sues
 The charming captive, obstinately cruel.
 Oft he alarms her for her child confin'd
 Apart ; and when her tears begin to flow,
 As soon he stops them, and recalls his threats.
 Hermione a thousand times has seen
 His ill-requited vows return to her ;
 And takes his indignation all for love.
 What can be gather'd from a man so various ?
 He may, in the disorder of his soul,
 Wed her he hates ; and punish her he loves.

Orest. But tell me how the wrong'd Hermione
 Brooks her slow nuptials, and dishonour'd charms ?

Pyl. Hermione would fain be thought to scorn
 Her wavering lover, and disdain his falsehood ;
 But, spite of all her pride and conscious beauty,
 She mourns in secret her neglected charms ;
 And oft has made me privy to her tears :
 Still threatens to be gone : yet still she stays ;
 And sometimes sighs, and wishes for Orestes :

Orest. Ah, were those wishes from her heart, my
 friend,
 I'd fly in transport—— [Flourish within.

Pyl. Hear!—the king approaches
 To give you audience. Speak your embassy
 Without reserve : urge the demands of Greece ;
 And, in the name of all her kings, require,
 That Hector's son be giv'n into your hands,

Pyrrhus, instead of granting what they ask,
To speed his love and win the Trojan dame,
Will make it merit to preserve her son.
But, see ; he comes.

Orest. Mean while, my Pylades,
Go, and dispose Hermione to see
Her lover, who is come thus far, to throw
Himself, in all his sorrows, at her feet.

Enter PYRRHUS, PHOENIX, and Attendants.

Before I speak the message of the Greeks,
Permit me, sir, to glory in the title
Of their ambassador ; since I behold
Troy's vanquisher, and great Achilles' son.
Nor does the son rise short of such a father :
If Hector fell by him. Troy fell by you.
But what your father never would have done,
You do. You cherish the remains of Troy ;
And by an ill-tim'd pity keep alive
The dying embers of a ten years war.
Have you so soon forgot the mighty Hector ?
The Greeks remember his high brandish'd sword,
That fill'd their states with widows and with orphans,
For which they call for vengeance on his son.
Who knows what he may one day prove ? Who
knows

But he may brave us in our ports ; and, fill'd
With Hector's fury, set our fleets on blaze.
You may, yourself, live to repent your mercy.
Comply, then, with the Grecians' just demands :
Sate their vengeance, and preserve yourself.

Pyr. The Greeks are for my safety more concern'd
 Than I desire. I thought your kings were met
 On more important counsel. When I heard
 The name of their ambassador, I hop'd
 Some glorious enterprize was taking birth.
 Is Agamemnon's son dispatch'd for this?
 And do the Grecian chiefs, renown'd in war,
 A race of heroes, join in close debate,
 To plot an infant's death!—What right has Greece
 To ask his life? Must I, must I alone,
 Of all the scepter'd warriors, be deny'd
 To treat my captive as I please? Know, prince,
 When Troy lay smoking on the ground, and each
 Proud victor shar'd the harvest of the war,
 Andromache and this her son were mine;
 Were mine by lot; and who shall wrest them from
 me?

Ulysses bore away old Priam's queen;
 Cassandra was your own great father's prize;
 Did I concern myself in what they won?
 Did I send embassies to claim their captives?

Orest. But, sir, we fear for you, and for ourselves.
 Troy may again revive, and a new Hector
 Rise in Astyanax. Then think betimes—

Pyr. Let dastard souls be timorously wise:
 But tell them, Pyrrhus knows not how to form
 Far-fancy'd ills, and dangers out of sight.

Orest. Sir, call to mind the unrivall'd strength of
 Troy;
 Her walls, her bulwarks, and her gates of brass;
 Her kings, her heroes, and embattled armies!

Pyr. I call them all to mind ; and see them all
 Confus'd in dust ; all mixt in one wide ruin ;
 All but a child, and he in bondage held.
 What vengeance can we fear from a such a Troy ?
 If they have sworn to extinguish Hector's race,
 Why was their vow for twelve long months deferr'd ?
 Why was he not in Priam's bosom slain ?
 He should have fall'n among the slaughter'd heaps,
 Whelm'd under Troy. His death had then been just.
 " When age and infancy, alike in vain,
 " Pleaded their weakness ; when the heat of conquest,
 " And horrors of the fight, rous'd all our rage,
 " And blindly hurry'd us thro' scenes of death."
 My fury then was without bounds : but now,
 My wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still ?
 And, deaf to all the tender calls of pity,
 Like a cool murderer, bathe my hands in blood ;
 An infant's blood ?—No, prince—go, bid the Greeks
 Mark out some other victim ; my revenge
 Has had its fill. What has escap'd from Troy
 Shall not be sav'd to perish in Epirus.

Orest. I need not tell you, sir, Aftyanax
 Was doom'd to death in Troy ; nor mention how
 The crafty mother sav'd her darling son :
 The Greeks do now but urge their former sentence ;
 Nor is't the boy, but Hector, they pursue ;
 The father draws their vengeance on the son :
 The father, who so oft in Grecian blood
 Has drench'd his sword ; the father, whom the Greeks
 May seek even here.—Prevent them, sir, in time.

Pyr. No ! let them come ; since I was born to wage

Eternal wars. Let them now turn their arms
On him, who conquer'd for them: let them come,
And in Epirus seek another Troy.

'Twas thus they recompens'd my godlike fire;
Thus was Achilles thank'd. But, prince, remember,
Their black ingratitude then cost them dear.

Orest. Shall Greece then find a rebel son in Pyrrhus?

Pyr. Have I then conquer'd to depend on Greece?

Orest. Hermione will sway your soul to peace,
And mediate 'twixt her father and yourself:
Her beauty will enforce my embassy.

Pyr. Hermione may have her charms; and I
May love her still, tho' not her father's slave.
I may in time give proofs, that I'm a lover;
But never must forget, that I'm a king.
Meanwhile, sir, you may see fair Hellen's daughter;
I know how near in blood you stand ally'd.
That done, you have my answer, prince. The
Greeks,

No doubt, expect your quick return. [*Ex. Orest. &c.*]

Phan. Sir, do you send your rival to the princess?

Pyr. I am told, that he has lov'd her long.

Phan. If so,

Have you not cause to fear the smother'd flame
May kindle at her sight, and blaze anew?
And she be brought to listen to his passion.

Pyr. Ay, let them, Phoenix, let them love their fill!
Let them go hence; let them depart together:
'Together let them sail for Sparta: all my ports
Are open to them both. From what constraint,
What irksome thoughts, should I be then reliev'd!

Phan. But, sir,—

Pyr. I shall another time good Phœnix,
Unbosom to thee all my thoughts—for, see,
Andromache appears.

Enter ANDROMACHE, and CEPHISA.

Pyr. May I, madam,
Flatter my hopes so far as to believe
You come to seek me here?

Andr. This way, fir, leads
To those apartments where you guard my son.
Since you permit me, once a day, to visit,
All I have left of Hector and of Troy,
I go to weep a few sad moments with him.
I have not yet, to-day, embrac'd my child;
I have not held him in my widow'd arms.

Pyr. Ah, madam, should the threats of Greece
prevail,
You'll have occasion for your tears, indeed?

Andr. Alas, what threats! What can alarm the
Greeks?

There are no Trojans left!

Pyr. Their hate to Hector
Can never die: the terror of his name
Still shakes their souls; and makes them dread his
son.

Pyr. A mighty honour for victorious Greece,
To fear an infant, a poor friendless child!
Who smiles in bondage: nor yet knows himself
The son of Hector, and the slave of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Weak as he is, the Greeks demand his life;

And send no less than Agamemnon's son,
To fetch him hence.

Andr. And, sir, do you comply
With such demands?—This blow is aim'd at me :
How should the child avenge his slaughter'd fire ?
But, cruel men ! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy heart, and ease my bonds.
I promis'd to myself in him a son,
In him a friend, a husband, and a father.
But I must suffer sorrow heap'd on sorrow ;
And still the fatal stroke must come from you.

Pyr. Dry up those tears, I must not see you weep,
And know, I have reject'd their demands.
The Greeks already threaten me with war :
But, should they arm, as once they did for Helen,
And hide the Adriatic with their fleets ;
Should they prepare a second ten years siege,
And lay my towers and palaces in dust :
I am determin'd to defend your son ;
And rather die myself than give him up.
But, madam, in the midst of all these dangers,
Will you refuse me a propitious smile ?
Hated of Greece, and press'd on every side,
Let me not, madam, while I fight your cause,
Let me not combat with your cruelties.
And count Andromache amongst my foes.

Andr. Consider, sir, how this will sound in Greece !
How can so great a soul betray such weakness ?
Let not men say, so generous a design
Was but the transport of a heart in love.

Pyr. Your charms will justify me to the world.

Andr. How can Andromache, a captive queen,

O'erwhelm'd with grief, a burthen to herself,
Harbour a thought of love? Alas! what charms
Have these unhappy eyes, by you condemn'd
To weep for ever?—Talk of it no more.
To reverence the misfortunes of a foe?
To succour the distrest; to give the son
To an afflicted mother; to repel
Confederate nations, leagu'd against his life;
Unbrib'd by love, untterrify'd by threats,
To pity, to protect him: these are cares,
These are exploits worthy Achilles' son.

Pyr. Will your resentments, then, endure for ever!
Must Pyrrhus never be forgiven? 'Tis true,
My sword has often reek'd in Phrygian blood,
And carried havoc through your royal kindred;
But you, fair princess, amply have aveng'd
Old Priam's vanquish'd house: and all the woes
I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
We both have suffer'd in our turns: and now
Our common foe should teach us to unite.

Andr. Where does the captive not behold a foe?

Pyr. Forget the term of hatred; and behold
A friend in Pyrrhus! Give me but to hope,
I'll free your son; I'll be a father to him:
Myself will teach him to avenge the Trojans.
I'll go in person to chastise the Greeks,
Both for your wrongs and mine. Inspir'd by you,
What would I not achieve? Again shall Troy
Rise from its ashes: this right arm shall fix
Her seat of empire; and your son shall reign.

B

Andr. Such dreams of greatness suit not my condition :

His hopes of empire perish'd with his father.
No ; thou imperial city, ancient Troy,
Thou pride of Asia, founded by the gods !
Never, Oh, never must we hope to see
Those bulwarks rise, which Hector could not guard !
Sir, all I wish for, is some quiet exile,
Where, far from Greece remov'd, and far from you,
I may conceal my son, and mourn my husband.
Your love creates my envy. Oh, return !
Return to your betroth'd Hermione.

Pyr. Why do you mock me thus ? You know, I cannot.

You know my heart is yours : my soul hangs on you :
You take up every wish : my waking thoughts,
And nightly dreams are all employ'd on you.
'Tis true, Hermione was sent to share
My throne and bed ; and would with transport hear
The vows which you neglect.

Andr. She has no Troy,
No Hector to lament : she has not lost
A husband by your conquests. Such a husband !
(Tormenting thought !) whose death alone has made
Your sire immortal : Pyrrhus and Achilles
Are both grown great by my calamities.

Pyr. Madam, 'tis well ! 'Tis very well ! I find,
Your will must be obey'd. Imperious captive,
It shall. Henceforth I blot you from my mind :
You teach me to forget your charms ; to hate you
For know, inhuman beauty, I have lov'd
Too well to treat you with indifference.

Think well upon it : my disorder'd soul
Wavers between th' extremes of love and rage ;
I've been too tame ; I will wake to vengeance !
The son shall answer for the mother's scorn.
The Greeks demand him : nor will I endanger
My realms, to pleasure an ungrateful woman.

Andr. Then he must die ! Alas, my son must die !
He has no friend, no succour left beside
His mother's tears, and his own innocence.

Pyr. Go, madam ; visit this unhappy son.
The sight of him may bend your stubborn heart ;
And turn to softness your unjust disdain.
I shall once more expect your answer. Go,
And think, while you embrace the captive boy,
Think that his life depends on your resolves.

[*Exit Pyrrhus, &c.*]

Andr. I'll go ; and in the anguish of my heart,
Weep o'er my child—If he must die, my life
Is wrapt in his ; I shall not long survive.
'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd life,
Groan'd in captivity, and-outliv'd Hector.
Yes, my Astyanax, we'll go together !
Together to the realms of night we'll go !
There to thy ravish'd eyes thy fire I'll shew,
And point him out among the shades below.

ACT II. SCENE I.

HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Hermione.

WELL, I'll be rul'd, Cleone : I will see him ;
I have told Pylades that he may bring him ;
But trust me, were I left to my own thoughts,
I should forbid him yet.

Cleo. And why forbid him ?

Is he not, madam, still the same Orestes ?
Orestes, whose return you oft have wish'd ?
The man whose sufferings you so oft lamented,
And often prais'd his constancy and love ?

Her. That love, that constancy, so ill requited,
Upbraids me to myself ! I blush to think
How I have us'd him ; and would shun his presence.
What will be my confusion when he sees me
Neglected, and forsaken, like himself ?
Will he not say, is this the scornful maid,
The proud Hermione, that tyranniz'd
In Sparta's court, and triumph'd in her charms ?
Her insolence at last is well repaid.
I cannot bear the thought !

Cleo. You wrong yourself
 With unbecoming fears. He knows too well
 Your beauty and your worth. Your lover comes not
 To offer insults ; but to repeat his vows.
 And breathe his ardent passion at your feet.
 But, madam, what's your royal father's will ?
 What orders do your letters bring from Sparta ?

Her. His orders are, if Pyrrhus still deny
 The nuptials, and refuse to sacrifice
 This Trojan boy, I should with speed embark,
 And with their embassy return to Greece.

Cleo. What would you more ? Orestes comes in time
 To save your honour. Pyrrhus cools apace :
 Prevent his falsehood, and forsake him first.
 I know you hate him ; you have told me so.

Her. Hate him ! My injur'd honour bids me hate him.
 Th' ungrateful man, to whom I fondly gave
 My virgin heart ; the man I lov'd so dearly ;
 The man I doated on ! Oh, my Cleone !
 How is it possible I should not hate him ?

Cleo. Then give him over, madam. Quit his court ;
 And with Orestes—

Her. No ! I must have time
 To work up all my rage ! To meditate
 A parting full of horror ! My revenge
 Will be but too much quicken'd by the traitor.

Cleo. Do you then wait new insults, new affronts ?
 To draw you from your father ! Then to leave you !
 In his own court to leave you—for a captive !
 If Pyrrhus can provoke you, he has done it.

Her. Why dost thou heighten my distress ? I fear
 To search out my own thoughts, and sound my heart.

Be blind to what thou see'st: believe me cur'd:
Flatter my weakness; tell me I have conquer'd;
Think that my injur'd soul is set against him;
And do thy best to make me think so too?

Cleo. Why would you loiter here, then?

Her. Let us fly!

Let us begone! I leave him to his captive:
Let him go kneel, and supplicate his slave.
Let us begone!—But what if he repent?
What if the perjur'd prince again submit,
And sue for pardon? What if he renew
His former vows?—But, oh, the faithless man!
He slights me! drives me to extremities!—However,
I'll stay, Cleone, to perplex their loves;
I'll stay, till by an open breach of contract,
I make him hateful to the Greeks. Already
Their vengeance have I drawn upon the son,
Their second embassy shall claim the mother:
I will redouble all my griefs upon her!

Cleo. Ah, madam, whither does your rage transport
you?
Andromache, alas! is innocent.

A woman plung'd in sorrow; dead to love:
And when she thinks on Pyrrhus, 'tis with horror.

Her. Would I had done so too!—He had not then
Betray'd my easy faith.—But I, alas!
Discover'd all the fondness of my soul!
I made no secret of my passion to him,
Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere:
My eyes, my tongue, my actions spoke my heart.

Cleo. Well might you speak without reserve to one
Engaged to you by solemn oaths and treaties.

Her. His ardour too was an excuse to mine :
With other eyes he saw me then !—Cleone,
Thou mayst remember, every thing conspir'd
To favour him : my father's wrongs aveng'd ;
The Greeks triumphant ; fleets of Trojan spoils ;
His mighty fire's, his own immortal fame ;
His eager love ;—all, all conspir'd against me !
—But I have done : I'll think no more of Pyrrhus.
Orestes wants not merit ; and he loves me.
My gratitude, my honour, both plead for him :
And if I've power over my own heart, 'tis his.

Cleo. Madam, he comes—

Her. Alas, I did not think
He was so near !—I wish I might not see him.

Enter ORESTES.

How am I to interpret, sir, this visit !

Is it a compliment of form, or love ?

Orest. Madam, you know my weakness. 'Tis my fate
To love unpity'd : to desire to see you ;
And still to swear each time shall be the last.
My passion breaks thro' my repeated oaths :
And every time I visit you I'm perjur'd.
Even now, I find my wounds all bleed afresh :
I blush to own it ; but I know no cure.
I call the gods to witness, I have try'd
Whatever man could do, (but try'd in vain,)
To wear you from my mind. Thro' stormy seas,

And savage climes, in a whole year of absence,
I courted dangers, and I long'd for death.

Her. Why will you, prince, indulge this mournful
tale?

It ill becomes the ambassador of Greece
To talk of dying and of love. Remember
The kings you represent: Shall their revenge
Be disappointed by your ill-tim'd passion?
Discharge your embassy: 'tis not Orestes
The Greeks desire should die.

Orest. My embassy
Is at an end, for Pyrrhus has refus'd
To give up Hector's son. Some hidden power
Protects the boy.

Her. Faithless, ungrateful man! [*Aside.*

Orest. I now prepare for Greece. But e'er I go,
Would hear my final doom pronounc'd by you—
What do I say— I do already hear it!
My doom is fixt: I read it in your eyes.

Her. Will you then still despair? be still suspicious?
What have I done? Wherein have I been cruel?
'Tis true, you find me in the court of Pyrrhus:
But 'twas my royal father sent me hither.
And who can tell but I have shar'd your griefs?
Have I ne'er wept in secret? Never wish'd
To see Orestes?

Orest. Wish'd to see Orestes! —
Oh joy! oh ecstasy? My soul's intranc'd?
Oh, charming prince! Oh, transcendent maid!
My utmost wish! Thus, thus let me express
My boundless thanks! — I never was unhappy—
Am I Orestes? —

Her. You are Orestes,
The same unalter'd, generous, faithful lover ;
The prince whom I esteem ; whom I lament ;
And whom I fain would teach my heart to love !

Orest. Ay, there it is ! I have but your esteem,
While Pyrrhus has your heart !

Her. Believe me, prince,
Were you as Pyrrhus, I should hate you !

Orest. No !——
I should be blest ! I should be lov'd as he is !——
Yet all this while I die by your disdain,
While he neglects your charms, and courts another.

Her. And who has told you, prince, that I'm neglected ?

Has Pyrrhus said——(Oh, I shall go distracted !)
Has Pyrrhus told you so ?——Or is it you,
Who think thus meanly of me ?——Sir, perhaps,
All do not judge like you !——

Orest. Madam, go on !
Insult me still : I'm us'd to bear your scorn.

Her. Why am I told how Pyrrhus loves or hates ?
——Go, prince, and arm the Greeks against the rebel ;
Let them lay waste his country ! raze his towns ;
Destroy his fleets ; his palaces ;——himself !——
Go, prince, and tell me then how much I love him.

Orest. To hasten his destruction, come yourself ;
And work your royal father to his ruin.

Her. Mean while he weds Andromache !

Orest. Ah, princess !
What is't I hear ?

Her. What infamy for Greece,

If he should wed a Phrygian, and a captive !

Orest. Is this your hatred, madam ?—'Tis in vain
To hide your passion ; every thing betrays it :
Your looks, your speech, your anger : nay, your silence ;

Your love appears in all ; your secret flame
Breaks out the more, the more you would conceal it.

Her. Your jealousy perverts my meaning still,
And wrests each circumstance to your disquiet ;
My very hate is constru'd into fondness.

Orest. Impute my fears, if groundless, to my love.

Her. Then hear me, prince. Obedience to a
father

First brought me hither ; and the same obedience
Detains me here, till Pyrrhus drive me hence,
Or my offended father shall recall me.

Tell this proud king, that Menelaus scorns
To match his daughter with a foe of Greece ;
Bid him resign Astyanax, or me.

If he persists to guard the hostile boy,
Hermione embarks with you for Sparta.

[*Ex. Her. and Cleone.*]

Orest. Then is Orestes blest ! My griefs are fled !
Fled like a dream !—Methinks I tread in air !

“ Pyrrhus, enamour'd of his captive queen,

“ Will thank me, if I take her rival hence :

“ He looks not on the princess with my eyes !

“ Surprising happiness !—Unlook'd-for joy !”

Never let love despair !—the prize is mine !

Be smooth, ye seas ! and ye, propitious winds,

Breathe from Epirus to the Spartan coasts !

I long to view the sails unfurl'd !—But, see !
Pyrrhus approaches in an happy hour.

Enter PYRRHUS, and PHOENIX.

Pyr. I was in pain to find you, prince. My
warm

Ungovern'd temper would not let me weigh
The importance of your embassy, and hear
You argue for my good.—I was to blame.
I since have pois'd your reasons ; and I thank
My good allies : their care deserves my thanks.
You have convinc'd me, that the weal of Greece,
My father's honour, and my own repose,
Demand that Hector's race should be destroy'd.
I shall deliver up Aftyanax ;
And you, yourself shall bear the victim hence.

Orest. If you approve it, sir, and are content
To spill the blood of a defenceless child ;
The offended Greeks, no doubt, will be pleas'd.

Pyr. Closer to strain the knot of our alliance,
I have determin'd to espouse Hermione.
You come in time to grace our nuptial rites :
In you the kings of Greece will all be present ;
And you have right to personate her father,
As his ambassador, and brother's son.
Go, prince, renew your visit ; tell Hermione,
To-morrow I receive her from your hands.

Orest. [*Aside*] Oh, change of fortune ! Oh, undone
Orestes ! *[Exit Orestes.]*

Pyr. Well, Phœnix, am I still a slave to love?
What think'st thou now? Am I myself again?

Phæn. 'Tis as it should be: this discovers Pyrrhus;
Shews all the hero. Now you are yourself!
The son, the rival of the great Achilles!
Greece will applaud you; and the world confess,
Pyrrhus has conquer'd Troy a second time!

Pyr. Nay, Phœnix, now I but begin to triumph:
I never was a conqueror 'till now!
Believe me, a whole host, a war of foes,
May sooner be subdu'd, than love. Oh, Phœnix,
What ruin have I shunn'd! The Greeks enrag'd,
Hung o'er me, like a gathering storm, and soon
Had burst in thunder on my head; while I
Abandon'd duty, empire, honour, all,
To please a thankless woman!—One kind look
Had quite undone me!

Phæn. Oh, my royal master!
The gods, in favour to you, made her cruel.

Pyr. Thou saw'st with how much scorn she treated
me!

When I permitted her to see her son,
I hop'd it might have work'd her to my wishes.
I went to see the mournful interview,
And found her bath'd in tears, and lost in passion.
Wild with distress, a thousand times she call'd
On Hector's name: and when I spoke in comfort,
And promis'd my protection to her son,
She kiss'd the boy; and call'd again on Hector:
"Then, strain'd him in her arms; and cry'd, 'Tis
he!

" 'Tis he himself! his eyes, his every feature!

“ His very frown, and his stern look already !

“ ’Tis he : ’Tis my lov’d lord whom I embrace ! ”

Does she then think, that I preserve the boy
To soothe, and keep alive her flame for Hector ?

Phæn. No doubt, she does ; and thinks you favour’d
in it ;

But let her go, for an ungrateful woman !

Pyr. I know the thoughts of her proud, stubborn
heart :

Vain of her charms, and insolent in beauty,
She mocks my rage ; and when it threatens loudest,
Expects ’twill soon be humbled into love.

But we shall change our parts ; and she shall find,
I can be deaf, like her ; and steel my heart.

She’s Hector’s widow ; I Achilles’ son !

Pyrhus is born to hate Andromache.

Phæn. My royal master, talk of her no more ;
I do not like this anger. Your Hermione

Should now engross your thoughts. ’Tis time to see
her ;

’Tis time you should prepare the nuptial rites ;

And not rely upon a rival’s care :

It may be dangerous.

Pyr. But tell me, Phoenix,
Dost thou not think, the proud Andromache

Will be enrag’d, when I shall wed the princess ?

Phæn. Why does Andromache still haunt your
thoughts ?

What is’t to you, be she enrag’d or pleas’d ?

Let her name perish : think of her no more !

Pyr. No, Phoenix !—I have been too gentle with
her,

I've check'd my wrath, and stifled my resentment :
She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.

Let us return :——I'll brave her to her face :

I'll give my anger its free course against her.

Thou shalt see, Phœnix, how I'll break her pride !

Phæn. Oh, go not, sir !—There's ruin in her eyes !

You do not know your strength : you'll fall before
her,

Adore her beauty, and revive her scorn.

Pyr. That were indeed a most unmanly weakness !

Thou dost not know me, Phœnix !

Phæn. Ah, my prince !

You are still struggling in the toils of love.

Pyr. Canst thou then think I love this woman
still !

One who repays my passion with disdain !

A stranger, captive, friendless and forlorn ;

She and her darling son within my power ;

His life a forfeit to the Greeks : Yet I

Preserve her son ; would take her to my throne ;

Would fight her battles, and avenge her wrongs ;

And all this while she treats me as her foe !

Phæn. You have it in your power to be reveng'd.

Pyr. Yes :—and I'll shew my power ! I'll give her
cause

To hate me ! her Aftyanax shall die.——

What tears will then be shed ! How will she then,

In bitterness of heart, reproach my name !

Then, to compleat her woes, will I espouse

Hermione :—'Twill stab her to the heart !

Phæn. Alas, you threaten like a lover still !

Pyr. Phœnix, excuse this struggle of my soul :
'Tis the last effort of expiring love.

Phæn. Then hasten, sir, to see the Spartan princess ;
And turn the bent of your desires on her.

Pyr. Oh ! 'tis a heavy task to conquer love.
And wean the soul from her accustom'd fondness.
But, come :—A long farewell to Hector's widow.
'Tis with a secret pleasure I look back,
And see the many dangers I have pass'd.
The merchant thus, in dreadful tempests tost,
Thrown by the waves on some unlook'd-for coast,
Oft turns, and sees, with a delighted eye,
Midst rocks and shelves the broken billows fly !
And while the outrageous winds the deep deform,
Smiles on the tumult, and enjoys the storm. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

PYLADES and ORESTES.

Pylades.

For Heaven's sake, sir, compose your ruffled mind !
And moderate your rage !

Orest. No, Pylades !

This is no time for counsel.—I am deaf.

Talk not of reason ! I have been too patient.
Life is not worth my care. My soul grows desperate.
I'll bear her off, or perish in the attempt.
I'll force her from his arms :——By Heav'n I will !

Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my friend :——We'll force
her hence,

But still consider, we are in Epirus.
The court, the guards, Hermione herself,
The very air we breathe, belongs to Pyrrhus.
Good gods ! what tempted you to seek her here ?

Orest. Lost to myself, I knew not what I did !
My purposes were wild. Perhaps I came
To menace Pyrrhus, and upbraid the woman.

Pyr. This violence of temper may prove fatal.

Orest. It must be more than man to bear these
shocks,

These outrages of fate, with temper !
He tells me, that he weds Hermione ;
And will to-morrow take her from my hand !——
My hand shall sooner tear the tyrant's heart.——

Pyl. Your passion blinds you, sir ; he's not to
blame.

Could you but look into the soul of Pyrrhus,
Perhaps you'd find it tortur'd, like your own.

Orest. No, Pylades ! 'Tis all design——His pride,
To triumph over me, has chang'd his love.
The fair Hermione, before I came,
In all her bloom of beauty, was neglected.
Ah, cruel gods ! I thought her all my own !
She was consenting to return to Sparta :
Her heart, divided betwixt rage and love,
Was on the wing to take its leave of Pyrrhus.

She heard my sighs ; she pitied my complaints ;
She prais'd my constancy ;——The least indifference
From this proud king, had made Orestes happy.

Pyl. So your fond heart believes !

“ *Orest.* Did I not see

“ Her hate, her rage, her indignation rise

“ Against the ungrateful man ?

“ *Pyl.* Believe me, prince,

“ 'Twas then she lov'd him most ! Had Pyrrhus left
her,

“ She would have form'd some new pretext to stay.”

Take my advice :—Think not to force her hence ;

But fly yourself from her destructive charms.

Her soul is link'd to Pyrrhus : “ Were she yours,

“ She would reproach you still, and still regret

“ Her disappointed nuptials.——”

Orest. Talk no more !

I cannot bear the thought ! She must be mine !

Did Pyrrhus carry thunder in his hand,

I'd stand the bolt, and challenge all his fury,

Ere I resign'd Hermione.——By force

I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my ships ;

Have we forgot her mother Helen's rape ?

Pyl. Will then Orestes turn a ravisher !

And blot his embassy ?

Orest. Oh, Pylades !

My grief weighs heavy on me :—'Twill distract me !

“ O leave me to myself !——Let not thy friendship

“ Involve thee in my woes. Too long already,

“ Too long hast thou been punish'd for my crimes.

“ It is enough, my friend !——It is enough !

“ Let not thy generous love betray thee farther :”

The gods have set me as their mark, to empty
Their quivers on me.—Leave me to myself.

Mine be the danger ; mine the enterprize.

All I request of thee is, to return,

And in my place convey Aftyanax

(As Pyrrhus has consented) into Greece.

Go, Pylades——

Pyl. Lead on, my friend, lead on !

Let us bear off Hermione ! No toil,

No danger can deter a friend :—Lead on !

Draw up the Greeks ; summon your num'rous train :

The ships are ready and the wind sits fair :

There eastward lies the sea ; the rolling waves

Break on those palace-stairs. I know each pass,

Each avenue and outlet of the court.

This very night we'll carry her on board.

Orest. Thou art too good !——I trespass on thy
friendship,

But, Oh ! excuse a wretch, whom no man pities,

Except thyself : one just about to lose

The treasure of his soul : “ whom all mankind

“ Conspire to hate, and one who hates himself.”

When will my friendship be of use to thee ?

Pyl. The question is unkind.—But now remember

To keep your counsels close, and hide your thoughts ;

Let not Hermione suspect—No more——

I see her coming, sir——

Orest. Away, my friend ;

I am advis'd ; my all depends upon it. [*Ex. Pylades.*]

Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Orest. Madam, your orders are obey'd ; I have
seen

Pyrrhus, my rival ; and have gain'd him for you.
The king resolves to wed you.

Her. So I am told :

And farther, I'm inform'd that you, Orestes,
Are to dispose me for the intended marriage.

Orest. And are you, madam, willing to comply ?

" *Her.* Could I imagine Pyrrhus lov'd me still ?

" After so long delays, who would have thought

" His hidden flames would shew themselves at last,

" And kindle in his breast, when mine expir'd ?

" I can suppose, with you, he fears the Greeks ;

" That it is interest, and not love, directs him ;

" And that my eyes had greater power o'er you.

" *Orest.* No, princess, no ! It is too plain he loves
you.

" Your eyes do what they will, and cannot fail

" To gain a conquest, where you wish they should."

Her. What can I do ? alas ! my faith is promis'd.
Can I refuse what is not mine to give ?

A princess is not at her choice to love ;

All we have left us is a blind obedience :

And yet, you see, how far I had comply'd,

And made my duty yield to your intreaties.

Orest. Ah, cruel maid ! you knew—but I have
done.

All have a right to please themselves in love :

I blame not you. 'Tis true, I hop'd ;—but you

Are mistress of your heart, and I'm content.
 'Tis fortune is my enemy, not you.
 But, madam, I shall spare you farther pain
 On this uneasy theme, and take my leave.

[Exit Orestes.]

Her. Cleone, could'st thou think he'd be so calm :

Cleo. Madam, his silent grief sits heavy on him.
 He's to be pitied. His too eager love
 Has made him busy to his own destruction.
 His threats have wrought this change of mind in
 Pyrrhus.

Her. Dost thou think Pyrrhus capable of fear !
 Whom should the intrepid Pyrrhus fear ? the Greeks ?
 Did he not lead their harass'd troops to conquest
 When they despair'd, when they retir'd from Troy,
 And sought for shelter in their burning fleets ?
 Did he not then supply his father's place ?
 No, my Cleone, he is above constraint ;
 He acts unforc'd ; and where he weds he loves.

Cleo. Oh, that Orestes had remain'd in Greece !
 I fear to-morrow will prove fatal to him.

Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing but Orestes ?
 Pyrrhus is mine again !—Is mine for ever !
 Oh, my Cleone ! I am wild with joy !
 Pyrrhus, the bold ! the brave ! the godlike Pyrrhus !
 —Oh, I could tell thee numberless exploits,
 And tire thee with his battles—Oh, Cleone—

Cleo. Madam, conceal your joy—I see Andromache :
 She weeps, and comes to speak her sorrows to you.

Her. I would indulge the gladness of my heart !
 Let us retire : her grief is out of season.

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

Andr. Ah, madam, whither, whither do you fly?
Where can your eyes behold a sight more pleasing
Than Hector's widow suppliant and in tears?
I come not an alarm'd, a jealous foe,
To envy you the heart your charms have won:
The only man I fought to please, is gone;
Kill'd in my fight, by an inhuman hand.
"Hector first taught me love; which my fond heart
"Shall ever cherish, 'till we meet in death."
But, Oh, I have a son!—And you, one day,
Will be no stranger to a mother's fondness:
But Heav'n forbid that you should ever know
A mother's sorrow for an only son.
Her joy, her bliss, her last surviving comfort!
When every hour she trembles for his life!
Your power o'er Pyrrhus may relieve my fears.
Alas, what danger is there in a child,
Sav'd from the wreck of a whole ruin'd empire?
Let me go hide him in some desert isle:
You may rely upon my tender care
To keep him far from perils of ambition:
All he can learn of me, will be to weep.

Her. Madam, 'tis easy to conceive your grief:
But, it would ill become me, to solicit
In contradiction to my father's will:
'Tis he who urges to destroy your son.
Madam, if Pyrrhus must be wrought to pity,
No woman does it better than yourself;

If you gain him, I shall comply of course.

[Exit. Her. and Cleone.

Andr. Did'st thou not mind with what disdain she spoke?

Youth and prosperity have made her vain;
She has not seen the fickle turns of life.

Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her counsel!

I'd speak my own distress: one look from you
Will vanquish Pyrrhus, and confound the Greeks—
See, where he comes—Lay hold on this occasion.

Enter PYRRHUS and PHOENIX.

Pyr. Where is the princess?—Did you not inform me

Hermione was here?

[To Phœnix.

Phæn. I thought so, sir.

Andr. Thou seest what mighty power my eyes have on him!

[To Ceph.

Pyr. What says she, Phœnix?

Andr. I have no hope left!

Phæn. Let us begone:—Hermione expects you.

Ceph. For Heaven's sake, madam, break this fullen silence.

Andr. My child's already promis'd—

Ceph. But not given.

Andr. No, no! my tears are vain! his doom is fixt!

Pyr. See, if she deigns to cast one look upon us!
Proud woman!

Andr. I provoke him by my presence.
Let us retire.

Pyr. Come, let us satisfy
The Greeks; and give them up this Phrygian boy.

Andr. Ah, fir ! recall those words—What have you said !

If you give up my son, Oh, give up me !—
You, who so many times have sworn me friendship :
Oh, Heav'ns !—will you not look with pity on me ?
Is there no hope ? is there no room for pardon ?

Pyr. Phoenix will answer you : my word is past.

Andr. You, who would brave so many dangers for me.

Pyr. I was your lover then : I now am free.
To favour you, I might have spar'd his life :
But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.
Now, 'tis too late.

“ *Andr.* Ah, fir, you understood
“ My tears, my wishes, which I durst not utter,
“ Afraid of a repulse.” Oh, fir, excuse
The pride of Royal blood, that checks my soul.
You know, alas ! I was not born to kneel,
To sue for pity, and to own a master.

Pyr. No ! in your heart you curse me ! you disdain
My generous flame, and scorn to be oblig'd !
“ This very son, this darling of your soul,
“ Would be less dear, did I preserve him for you.
“ Your anger, your aversion fall on me !
“ You hate me more than the whole league of Greece :”
But I shall leave you to your great resentments.
Let us go, Phoenix, and, appease the Greeks.

Andr. Then, let me die ! and let me go to Hector.

Ceph. But, madam—

Andr. What can I do more ? The tyrant
Sees my distraction and insults my tears. [*To Ceph.*
—Behold how low you have reduc'd a queen !

These eyes have seen my country laid in ashes ;
My kindred fall in war ; my father slain ;
My husband dragg'd in his own blood ; my son
Condemn'd to bondage, and myself a slave ;
Yet, in the midst of these unheard-of woes,
'Twas some relief to find myself your captive ;
And that my son, deriv'd from ancient kings,
Since he must serve, had Pyrrhus for his master.
When Priam kneel'd the great Achilles wept :
I hop'd I should not find his son less noble.
I thought the brave were still the most compassionate.
Oh, do not, sir, divide me from my child !
If he must die——

Pyr. Phoenix, withdraw a while. [*Ex. Phoenix.*
Rise, madam—Yet you may preserve your son.
I find whenever I provoke your tears,
I furnish you with arms against myself.
I thought my hatred fixt before I saw you,
Oh, turn your eyes upon me, while I speak !
And see, if you discover in my looks
An angry judge, or an obdurate foe.
Why will you force me to desert your cause ?
In your son's name I beg we may be friends ;
“ Let me entreat you to secure his life !
“ Must I turn suppliant for him ?” Think, oh think,
'Tis the last time, you both may yet be happy !
I know the ties I break ; the foes I arm :
I wrong Hermione ; I send her hence ;
And with her diadem I bind your brows.
Consider well ; for 'tis of moment to you !
Choose to be wretched, madam, or a queen.
“ My soul, consum'd with a whole year's despair,

" Can bear no longer these perplexing doubts ;
" Enough of sighs, and tears, and threats I've try'd ;
" I know, if I'm depriv'd of you, I die ;
" But oh, I die, if I wait longer for you !"
I leave you to your thoughts. When I return,
We'll to the temple ; there you'll find your son ;
And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever.

[*Exit Pyrrhus.*]

Ceph. I told you, madam, that, in spite of Greece,
You would o'er-rule the malice of your fortune.

Andr. Alas ! Cephisa, what have I obtain'd !
Only a poor short respite for my son.

Ceph. You have enough approv'd your faith to
Hector ;

To be reluctant still would be a crime.
He would himself persuade you to comply,

Andr. How——wouldst thou give me Pyrrhus for
a husband ?

Ceph. Think you, 'twill please the ghost of your
dead husband,

That you should sacrifice his son ? Consider,
Pyrrhus once more invites you to a throne ;
Turns all his power against the foes of Troy ;
Remembers not Achilles was his father ;
Retracts his conquest, and forgets his hatred.

Andr. But how can I forget it ! How can I
Forget my Hector treated with dishonour ;
Depriv'd of funeral rites ; and vilely dragg'd,
A bloody corse, about the walls of Troy ?
Can I forget the good old king his father,
Slain in my presence ; at the altar slain !
Which vainly, for protection, he embrac'd ?

Hast thou forgot that dreadful night, Cephisa,
 When a whole people fell? methinks I see
 Pyrrhus enrag'd, and breathing vengeance, enter
 Amidst the glare of burning palaces:

I see him hew his passage through my brothers;
 And, bath'd in blood, lay all my kindred waste.
 Think in this scene of horror, what I suffer'd!
 This is the courtship I receiv'd from Pyrrhus;
 And this the husband thou wouldst give me! No,
 We both will perish first! I'll ne'er consent.

Ceph. Since you resolve Aftyanax shall die,
 Hasten to the temple, bid your son farewell.
 Why do you tremble, madam?

Andr. O Cephisa!

Thou hast awaken'd all the mother in me.
 How can I bid farewell to the dear child,
 The pledge, the image of my much-lov'd lord!
 "Alas, I call to mind the fatal day,
 "When his too-forward courage led him forth
 "To seek Achilles.

"*Ceph.* Oh, the unhappy hour!

"'Twas then Troy fell, and all her gods forsook her.

"*Andr.* That morn, Cephisa, that ill-fated morn,
 "My husband bid thee bring Aftyanax;
 "He took him in his arms; and, as I wept,
 "My wife, my dear Andromache, said he,
 "(Heaving with stifled sighs to see me weep)
 "What fortune may attend my arms, the gods
 "Alone can tell. To thee I give the boy;
 "Preserve him as the token of our loves;
 "If I should fall, let him not miss his fire
 "While thou surviv'st; but by thy tender care

“ Let the son see that thou didst love his father.

“ *Ceph.* And will you throw away a life so precious ?

“ At once extirpate all the Trojan line ?

“ *Andr.* Inhuman king ! What has he done to suffer ?

“ If I neglect your vows, is he to blame ?

“ Has he reproach’d you with his slaughter’d kindred ?

“ Can he resent those ills he does not know ?”

But, oh ! while I deliberate he dies.

No, no, thou must not die, while I can save thee ;

Oh ! let me find out Pyrrhus—Oh, Cephisa !

Do thou go find him.

Ceph. What must I say to him ?

Andr. Tell him I love my son to such excess—

But dost thou think he means the child shall die ?

Can love rejected turn to so much rage ?

Ceph. Madam, he’ll soon be here—— Resolve on something.

Andr. Well then, assure him—

Ceph. Madam, of your love ?

Andr. Alas, thou know’st it is not in my power.

Oh, my dead lord ! Oh, Priam’s royal house !

Oh, my Astyanax ! At what a price

Thy mother buys thee !—— Let us go.

Ceph. But whither ?

And what does your unsettled heart resolve ?

Andr. Come, my Cephisa, let us go together,

To the sad monument which I have rais’d

To Hector’s shade ; where in their sacred urn

The ashes of my hero lie inclos’d ;

The dear remains, which I have sav’d from Troy ;

There let me weep, there summon to my aid,

With pious rites, my Hector's awful shade ;
 Let him be witness to my doubts, my fears ;
 My agonizing heart, my flowing tears ;
 Oh ! may he rise in pity from his tomb,
 And fix his wretched son's uncertain doom.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ANDROMACHE, CEPHISA.

Cephisa.

" BLEST be the tomb of Hector, that inspires
 " These pious thoughts : or is it Hector's self,
 " That prompts you to preserve your son ! 'Tis he
 " Who still presides o'er ruin'd Troy ; 'tis he
 " Who urges Pyrrhus to restore Astyanax.

" *Andr.* Pyrrhus has said he will ; and thou hast
 heard him

" Just now renew the oft-repeated promise.

" *Ceph.* Already in the transports of his heart,
 " He gives you up his kingdom, his allies,
 " And thinks himself o'er-paid for all in you.

" *Andr.* I think I may rely upon his promise :
 " And yet my heart is over-charg'd with grief.

" *Ceph.* Why should you grieve ! You see he bids
 defiance

" To all the Greeks ; and to protect your son
 " Against their rage, has plac'd his guards about him ;
 " Leaving himself defenceless for his sake :
 " But, madam, think, the coronation pomp

" Will soon demand your presence in the temple :

" 'Tis time you lay aside these mourning weeds.

" *Andr.* I will be there ; but first would see my son.

" *Ceph.* Madam, you need not now be anxious for him,

" He will be always with you, all your own,

" To lavish the whole mother's fondness on him.

" What a delight to train beneath your eye,

" A son, who grows no longer up in bondage ?

" A son, in whom a race of kings revive :

" But, madam, you are sad, and wrapt in thought,

" As if you relish'd not your happiness.

" *Andr.* Oh, I must see my son once more, Cephisa!

Ceph. Madam, he now will be no more a captive ;

" Your visits may be frequent as you please.

" To-morrow you may pass the live-long day——

" *Andr.* To-morrow! Oh, Cephisa!— But, no more!

" Cephisa, I have always found thee faithful :

" A load of care weighs down my drooping heart.

Ceph. Oh ! that 'twere possible for me to ease you.

Andr. I soon shall exercise thy long-try'd faith.—

" Mean while I do conjure thee, my Cephisa,

" Thou take no notice of my present trouble :

" And when I shall disclose my secret purpose,

" That thou be punctual to perform my will.

" *Ceph.* Madam, I have no will but yours. My life

" Is nothing, balanc'd with my love to you.

" *Andr.* I thank thee, good Cephisa, my Astyanax

" Will recompense thy friendship to his mother.

" But, come ; my heart's at ease : assist me now

" To change this sable habit."—Yonder comes

Hermione ; I would not meet her rage. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HERMIONE and CLEONE.

Cleo. This unexpected silence, this reserve,
This outward calm, this settled frame of mind,
After such wrongs and insults, much surprise me !
You, who before could not command your rage,
When Pyrrhus look'd but kindly on his captive ;
How can you bear unmov'd, that he should wed her ?
And seat her on a throne which you should fill ?
I fear this dreadful stillness in your soul !
'T were better madam—

Her. Have you call'd Orestes ?

Cleo. Madam, I have ; his love is too impatient
Not to obey with speed the welcome summons.
His love-sick heart o'erlooks his unkind usage :
His ardour's still the same—Madam, he's here.

Enter ORESTES.

Orest. Ah, madam, is it true ? Does, then, Orestes
At length attend you by your own commands ?
What can I do——

Her. Orestes, do you love me ?

Orest. What means that question, princess ? Do I
love you ?

My oaths, my perjuries, my hopes, my fears,
My farewell, my return, all speak my love.

Her. Avenge my wrongs, and I'll believe them all.

Orest. It shall be done—my soul has catch'd the
alarm.

We'll spirit up the Greeks—I'll lead them on—
Your cause shall animate our fleets and armies.
Let us return : let us not lose a moment,
But urge the fate of this devoted land :
Let us depart.

Her. No, prince, let us stay here !
I will have vengeance here—I will not carry
This load of infamy to Greece, nor trust
The chance of war to vindicate my wrongs.
Ere I depart, I'll make Epirus mourn.
If you avenge me, let it be this instant ;
My rage brooks no delay—Haste to the temple,
Haste, prince, and sacrifice him.

Orest. Whom !

Her. Why, Pyrrhus.

Orest. Pyrrhus ! Did you say, Pyrrhus ?

Her. You demur !

Oh, fly, begone ! give me no time to think !
Talk not of laws—he tramples on all laws—
Let me not hear him justify'd—away.

Orest. You cannot think I'll justify my rival.
Madam, your love has made him criminal.
You shall have vengeance ; I'll have vengeance too :
But let our hatred be profest and open :
Let us alarm all Greece, denounce a war ;
Let us attack him in his strength, and hunt him down
By conquest : should I turn base assassin,
'Twould sully all the kings I represent.

Her. Have I not been dishonour'd ! set at nought !
Expos'd to public scorn !—and will you suffer
The tyrant, who dares use me thus, to live ?
Know, prince, I hate him more than once I lov'd him ;

The Gods alone can tell how once I lov'd him ;
 Yes, the false perjur'd man, I once did love him ;
 And spite of all his crimes and broken vows,
 If he should live, I may relapse—who knows
 But I to-morrow may forgive his wrongs ?

Orest. First let me tear him piece-meal—he shall die.
 But, madam, give me leisure to contrive
 The place, the time, the manner of his death :
 Yet, I'm a stranger in the court of Pyrrhus ;
 Scarce have I set my foot within Epirus,
 When you enjoin me to destroy the prince.
 It shall be done this very night.

Her. But now,
 This very hour, he weds Andromache ;
 The temple shines with pomp : the golden throne
 Is now prepar'd ; the joyful rites begin ;
 My shame is public—Oh, be speedy, prince !
 My wrath's impatient—Pyrrhus lives too long !
 Intent on love, and heedless of his person,
 He covers with his guards the Trojan boy.
 Now is the time ; assemble all your Greeks ;
 Mine shall assist them ; let their fury loose :
 Already they regard him as a foe.
 Begone, Orestes—kill the faithless tyrant :
 My love shall recompense the glorious deed.

Orest. Consider, madam——

Her. You but mock my rage !
 I was contriving how to make you happy.
 Think you to merit by your idle sighs,
 And not attest your love by one brave action ?
 Go, with your boasted constancy ! and leave
 Hermione to execute her own revenge !

I blush to think how my too easy faith
Has twice been baffled in one shameful hour !

Orest. Hear me but speak ! — you know I'll die to
serve you !

Her. I'll go myself : I'll stab him at the altar ;
Then drive the poinard, reeking with his blood,
Through my own heart. In death we shall unite :
Better to die with him, than live with you !

Orest. That were to make him blest ; and me more
wretched :

Madam, he dies by me : — Have you a foe,
And shall I let him live ? My rival, too ?
Ere you meridian sun declines, he dies :
And you shall say, that I deserve your love.

Her. Go, prince ; strike home ! and leave the rest
to me.

Let all your ships be ready for our flight.

[*Exit Orestes.*]

Cleo. Madam, you'll perish in this bold attempt.

Her. Give me my vengeance, I'm content to perish.

I was to blame to trust it with another :

In my own hands it had been more secure.

Orestes hates not Pyrrhus as I hate him :

“ I should have thrust the dagger home ; have seen

“ The tyrant curse me with his parting breath,

“ And roll about his dying eyes, in vain,

“ To find Andromache, whom I would hide.”

Oh, would Orestes, when he gives the blow,

Tell him he dies my victim ! — Haste, Cleone ;

Charge him to say, Hermione's resentments,

Not those of Greece, have sentenc'd him to death.

Haste, my Cleone ! my revenge is lost,

If Pyrrhus knows not that he dies by me !

Cleo. I shall obey your orders—— But see
The king approach !—Who could expect him here.

Her. O fly ! Cleone, fly ! and bid Orestes
Not proceed a step before I see him. [*Exit Cleone.*]

Enter PYRRHUS.

Pyr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd princess :
Your distant looks reproach me : and I come
Not to defend, but to avow my guilt.

Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own injustice ;
Nor form excuses, while his heart condemns him.

" I might perhaps alledge, our warlike fires,

" Unknown to us, engag'd us to each other.

" And join'd our hearts by contract, not by love :

" But I detest such cobweb arts, I own

" My father's treaty, and allow its force.

" I sent ambassadors to call you hither ;

" Receiv'd you as my queen ; and hop'd my oaths

" So oft renew'd might ripen into love.

" The gods can witness, madam, how I fought

" Against Andromache's too fatal charms !

" And still I wish I had the power to leave

" This Trojan beauty, and be just to you."

Discharge your anger on this perjur'd man !

For I abhor my crime ! and should be pleas'd

To hear you speak your wrongs aloud : no terms,

No bitterness of wrath, nor keen reproach,

| Will equal half the upbraidings of my heart.

Her. I find, sir, you can be sincere : you scorn

To act your crimes with fear, like other men;
A hero should be bold; above all laws;
Be bravely false; and laugh at solemn ties.
To be perfidious shews a daring mind!
And you have nobly triumph'd o'er a maid!
To court me; to reject me; to return;
Then to forsake me for a Phrygian slave:
To lay proud Troy in ashes; then to raise
The son of Hector, and renounce the Greeks,
Are actions worthy the great soul of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Madam, go on: give your resentments birth;
And pour forth all your indignation on me.

Her. 'Twould please your queen, should I upbraid
your falsehood;

Call you perfidious, traitor, all the names
That injur'd virgins lavish on your sex;
I should o'erflow with tears, and die with grief,
And furnish out a tale to sooth her pride.
But, sir, I would not over-charge her joys:
If you would charm Andromache, recount
Your bloody battles, your exploits, your slaughters,
Your great achievements, in her father's palace.
She needs must love the man, who fought so bravely,
And in her sight slew half her royal kindred.

Pyr. With horror I look back on my past deeds!
I punish'd Helen's wrongs too far; I shed
Too much of blood: but madam, Helen's daughter
Should not object those ills the mother caus'd.
However I am pleas'd to find you hate me:
I was too forward to accuse myself:
The man who ne'er was lov'd, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a father brought you hither;

And I stood bound by promise to receive you :
 But our desires were different ways inclin'd ;
 And you, I own, were not oblig'd to love me.

Her. Have I not lov'd you, then ! perfidious man !
 For you I slighted all the Grecian princes ;
 Forsook my father's house ; conceal'd my wrongs,
 When most provok'd : would not return to Sparta,
 In hopes that time might fix your wavering heart,
 I lov'd you when inconstant : and even now,
 Inhuman king, that you pronounce my death,
 My heart still doubts, if I should love or hate you :
 But, oh, since you resolve to wed another,
 Defer your cruel purpose till to-morrow !
 That I may not be here to grace your triumph !
 This is the last request I e'er shall make you——
 See if the barbarous prince vouchsafes an answer !
 Go, then, to the lov'd Phrygian ! Hence ! begone !
 And bear to her those vows, that once were mine :
 Go, in defiance to the avenging gods !
 Begone ! the priest expects you at the altar——
 But, tyrant, have a care I come not thither. [*Ex. Her.*]

Enter PHOENIX.

Pha. Sir, did you mind her threats ? Your life's
 in danger !

There is no trifling with a woman's rage.
 The Greeks that swarm about the court, all hate you ;
 Will treat you as their country's enemy,
 And join in her revenge : besides, Orestes
 Still loves her to distraction : sir, I beg——

Pyr. How, Phoenix, should I fear a woman's threats ?

A nobler passion takes up all my thought :
 I must prepare to meet Andromache.
 Do thou place all my guards about her son :
 If he be safe, Pyrrhus is free from fear. [Ex. Pyr.

PHOENIX, *alone.*

Oh, Pyrrhus ! oh, what pity 'tis, the gods,
 Who fill'd thy soul with every kingly virtue,
 Form'd thee for empire and consummate greatness,
 Should leave thee so expos'd to wild desires,
 That hurry thee beyond the bounds of reason !

[*A flourish of trumpets.*

" Such was Achilles ; generous, fierce, and brave :
 " Open and undesigning : but impatient,
 " Undisciplin'd, and not to be control'd :
 " I fear this whirl of passion, this career,
 " That overbears reflection and cool thought ;
 " I tremble for the event !" — But see, the queen,
 Magnificent in royal pride, appears,
 I must obey, and guard her son from danger.

[*Exit Phoenix.*

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

Ceph. Madam, once more you look and move a
 queen !

Your sorrows are dispers'd, your charms revive,
 And every faded beauty blooms anew.

Andr. Yet all is not as I could wish, Cephisa.

Ceph. You see the king is watchful o'er your son ;
 Decks him with princely robes, with guards surrounds
 him.

Astyanax begins to reign already.

Andr. Pyrrhus is nobly minded : and I fain
Would live to thank him for Astyanax :
'Tis a vain thought—However, since my child
Has such a friend, I ought not to repine.

Ceph. “ These dark unfoldings of your soul perplex me.

“ What meant those floods of tears, those warm embraces,

“ As if you bid your son adieu for ever ?”

For Heav'n's sake, madam, let me know your griefs !
If you mistrust my faith——

Andr. That were to wrong thee.

Oh, my Cephisa ! this gay, borrow'd air,
This blaze of jewels, and this bridal dress,
Are but mock trappings to conceal my woe :
My heart still mourns ; I still am Hector's widow.

Ceph. Will you then break the promise giv'n to
Pyrrhus ;

Blow up his rage afresh, and blast your hopes ?

Andr. I thought, Cephisa, thou hadst known thy
mistress.

Could'st thou believe I would be false to Hector ?

Fall off from such a husband ! break his rest,

And call him to this hated light again,

To see Andromache in Pyrrhus' arms ?

“ Would Hector, were he living, and I dead,

“ Forget Andromache, and wed her foe ?”

Ceph. I cannot guess what drift your thoughts pursue ;
But, oh, I fear there's something dreadful in it !
Must then Astyanax be doom'd to die ;
And you to linger out a life in bondage ?

“ *Andr.* Nor this, nor that, Cephisa, will I bear ;
 “ My word is past to Pyrrhus, his to me ;
 “ And I rely upon his promis’d faith.
 “ Unequal as he is, I know him well :
 “ Pyrrhus is violent, but he’s sincere,
 “ And will perform beyond what he has sworn.
 “ The Greeks will but incense him more ; their rage
 “ Will make him cherish Hector’s son.

Ceph. Ah, madam,

“ Explain these riddles to my boding heart !

Andr. Thou may’st remember, for thou oft hast
 heard me

“ Relate the dreadful vision, which I saw,
 “ When first I landed captive in Epirus.
 “ That very night, as in a dream I lay,
 “ A ghastly figure, full of gaping wounds,
 “ His eyes aglare, his hair all stiff with blood,
 “ Full in my sight thrice shook his head, and groan’d ;
 “ I soon discern’d my slaughter’d Hector’s shade ;
 “ But, oh, how chang’d ! Ye gods, how much unlike
 “ The living Hector !—— Loud he bid me fly !
 “ Fly from Achilles’ son ! then sternly frown’d,
 “ And disappear’d. Struck with the dreadful sound,
 “ I started, and awak’d.

“ *Ceph.* But did he bid you

“ Destroy Aftyanax ?

Andr. “ Cephisa, I’ll preserve him ;”
 With my own life, Cephisa, I’ll preserve him.

Ceph. What may these words, so full of horror,
 mean ?

Andr. Know then the secret purpose of my soul :
 Andromache will not be false to Pyrrhus,

Nor violate her sacred love to Hector.
This hour I'll meet the king; the holy priest
Shall join us, and confirm our mutual vows:
This will secure a father to my child:
That done, I have no further use for life:
This pointed dagger, this determin'd hand,
Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

Ceph. Ah, madam! recollect your scatter'd reason;
"This fell despair ill suits your present fortunes.

Andr. No other stratagem can serve my purpose:
"This is the sole expedient to be just
"To Hector, to Astyanax, to Pyrrhus.
"I shall soon visit Hector, and the shades
"Of my great ancestors:"—Cephisa, thou
Wilt lend a hand to close thy mistress' eyes.

Ceph. Oh, never think that I will stay behind you!

Andr. No, my Cephisa; I must have thee live,
"Remember, thou didst promise to obey,
"And to be secret: wilt thou now betray me?
"After thy long, thy faithful service, wilt thou
"Refuse my last commands, my dying wish?
"Once more I do conjure thee live for me.

Ceph. Life is not worth my care when you are
gone."

Andr. I must commit into thy faithful hands
All that is dear and precious to my soul:
Live, and supply my absence to my child;
All that remains of Troy; a future progeny
Of heroes, and a distant line of kings,
In him, is all intrusted to thy care.

Ceph. But, madam, what will be the rage of
Pyrrhus,

“ Defrauded of his promis’d happiness ?

Andr. That will require thy utmost skill : Observe

“ The first impetuous onsets of his grief ;

“ Use ev’ry artifice to keep him stedfast.

“ Sometimes with tears thou mayst discourse of me ;

“ Speak of our marriage ; let him think I lov’d him ;

“ Tell him my soul repos’d itself on him,

“ When I resigned my son to his protection.”

Ceph. Oh, for a spirit to support my grief !

Is there ought more before you go for ever ?

Andr. Oh, my Cephisa ! my swoln heart is full !

I have a thousand farewells to my son :

But tears break in !—Grief interrupts my speech——

My soul o’erflows in fondness——Let him know

I dy’d to save him :—“ And would die again.”

Season his mind with early hints of glory ;

Make him acquainted with his ancestors ;

Trace out their shining story in his thoughts ;

Dwell on th’ exploits of his immortal father,

And sometimes let him hear his mother’s name.

“ Let him reflect upon his royal birth

“ With modest pride ; Pyrrhus will prove a friend ;

“ But let him know he has a conqueror’s right.”

He must be taught to stifle his resentments,

And sacrifice his vengeance to his safety.

Should he prove headstrong, rash, or unadvis’d,

He then will frustrate all his mother’s virtue,

Provoke his fate, and I shall die in vain.

Ceph. Alas ! I fear I never shall outlive you.

Andr. No more :—thy tears, Cephisa, will betray me ;

Assume a cheerful look : but still remember—

[*Flourish within.*]

Hark how the trumpet, with its sprightly notes,
Proclaims the appointed hour, and calls us hence,
Hector, I come, once more a queen, to join thee!
Thus the gay victim, with fresh garlands crown'd,
Pleas'd with the sacred fire's enliv'ning sound,
Through gazing crowds in solemn state proceeds,
And drest in fatal pomp magnificently bleeds.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

HERMIONE *alone.*

WHAT have I done? Where am I? Where is
Pyrrhus?

Ye gods! what mean these horrors?—I'm undone!

My soul is on the rack!—I cannot bear it:—

Why do I wander like some guilty ghost?

What brought me to this place? what keeps me here?

The court of Pyrrhus has no room for me!

Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?

Hard-hearted man! how unconcern'd he left me!

Did he once sigh? Bestow one pitying look?

Once shed a tear? or speak one soft, kind word?

Did he so much as feign one moment's sorrow,

To calm my griefs, and mitigate his falsehood?

Why am I still thus anxious for his life?

Why do I start at his impending fate?

Shall he then live? Shall the base traitor live

To laugh at my distress ? No, let him perish !
Be quick, Orestes ?—Execute my orders !
Alas ! my orders ! Oh, preposterous guilt !
Can I decree the death of him I love ?
Was it for this my soul delighted in him ?
Was it for this I left my father's court ?
Have I then cross'd so many realms and seas
To murder Pyrrhus ?

Enter CLEONE.

Her. Oh, Cleone, help me !

What have I done ? Is Pyrrhus yet alive ?
What say'st thou ?—Answer me : Where is the king ?

Cleo. Madam ! I saw the cruel prince set forward,
Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.
Still as he walk'd his ravish'd eyes were fixt
On the fair captive ; while through shouting crowds
She pass'd along with a dejected air,
And seem'd to mourn her Hector to the last.

Her. Insulting tyrant ! I shall burst with rage !
But say, Cleone, didst thou mark him well ?
Was his brow smooth ? Say, did there not appear
Some shade of grief ; some little cloud of sorrow ?
Did he not stop ? Did he not once look back ?
Didst thou approach him ? Was he not confounded ?
Did he not——Oh, be quick and tell me all !

Cleo. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits
No thought but love. Unguarded he march'd on,
'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and foes.
His cares all turn upon Astyanax,

Whom he has lodg'd within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards.

Her. Enough! he dies!—the traitor?—Where's
Orestes?

Cleo. He's in the temple with his whole retinue.

Her. Is he still resolute? Is he still determin'd?

Cleo. Madam, I fear——

Her. How! Is Orestes false?

Does he betray me too?

Cleo. A thousand doubts

Perplex his soul, and wound him with remorse:
His virtue and his love prevail by turns.

He told me Pyrrhus should not fall ignobly:

Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great Achilles.

He dreads the censure of the Grecian states;

Of all mankind; and fears to stain his honour.

Her. Poortim'rous wretch! 'tis false! he basely fears
To cope with dangers, and encounter death;
'Tis that he fears:—Am I bright Helen's daughter?
To vindicate her wrongs all Greece conspir'd;
For her confederate nations fought, and kings were
slain;

Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell.

My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm

Against a tyrant that has dar'd to wrong me.

Cleo. Madam, like Helen, trust your cause to Greece.

Her. No; I'll avenge myself; I'll to the temple;
I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest;

I'll hurl destruction like a whirlwind round me!

They must not wed! they must not live! they shall
not!

Let me be gone! I have no time to lose!

Stand off! hold me not! I am all distraction!

Oh, Pyrrhus! Tyrant! Traitor! Thou shalt bleed.

Enter ORESTES.

Orest. Madam, 'tis done; your orders are obey'd:
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.

Her. Is Pyrrhus slain?

Orest. Even now he gasps in death:
Our Greeks all undistinguish'd in the crowd,
Flock'd to the temple, and dispers'd themselves
On every side the altar. I was there;
Pyrrhus observ'd me with a haughty eye,
And, proud to triumph over Greece in me,
From his own brows he took the diadem
And bound it on the temples of his captive:
Receive, said he, my crown; receive my faith;
Mine and my people's sovereign reign for ever.
From this blest hour, a father to your son;
I'll scourge his foes: henceforward be he styl'd
The Trojan king; "I swear it at the altar,
"And call the gods to ratify my vows."
His subjects with loud acclamations shook
The spacious dome. Our Greeks, enrag'd, cried out,
Revenge! revenge! broke thro' the thronging press,
And rush'd tumultuous on the unregarded king,
"Their eager fury left no work for me."
Pyrrhus awhile oppos'd their clashing swords,
And dealt his fatal blows on ev'ry side
With manly fierceness; till oppress'd by numbers,
Streaming with blood, all over gash'd with wounds,

He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the altar fell.——

Haste, madam; let us fly! Haste to our ships!
They lie unmoor'd: our friends attend us there.

Her. What have they done!

Orest. Madam, forgive their rage.

I own your vengeance had been more complete,
Had Pyrrhus fall'n by me, and had he known
Hermione chastis'd him by my arm.

Her. Peace, monster, peace! Gotell thy horrid tale
To savages, and howl it in the deserts,
Would'st thou impute to me thy barb'rous guilt?
Me would'st thou make th' accomplice of thy crimes?
Hence to thy Greeks, and boast thy foul exploits!
My soul abhors them! I disclaim the deed!
Begone! I know thee not! Thou fell barbarian!
What had he done? What could provoke thy madness
To assassinate so great, so brave a man?
Who set thee on?

Orest. Oh grant me patience, heav'n!
With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant,
Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy him?

Her. What if, transported by my boundless passion,
I could not bear to see him wed another,
Were you to obey a jealous woman's phrenzy?
You should have div'd into my inmost thoughts:
My heart, tho' full of rage, was free from malice;
And all my anger was excess of love.
Why did you take me at my word? You saw
The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave;
You should have question'd me a thousand times,
Yet still have doubted, and still question'd on,
Before you ventur'd on a life so precious,

Orest. Hear me but speak : Heav'n knows, against
my will—

Her. Why did you not return ? Why not consult me
A second time ? And undetermin'd still,
Again return, and still find new delays ?
What had your rash officious Greeks, dire blood-
hounds !

To do with my revenge ? What drew you hither ?
To bring on me the vengeful woes that haunt you ?
Are these the fruits of your detested love ?
Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence,
Drove Pyrrhus to my rival ; and destroys
Both him and me. He might have lov'd me still,
Had you ne'er interpos'd——Avaunt ! Begone !
And leave me in Epirus. I renounce
My friends, my country, Greece, and all man-
kind:

But chiefly I renounce thee ! monster, thee! [*Exit.*

Orest. Am I awake ? Where am I ? Soft, my soul ;
Be not too rash.——Was that Hermione ?
Why should her anger thunder against me ?
Was not this blood shed all by her command ?——
I am, indeed, a most outrageous monster !
A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin !
And all to please a false, ungrateful woman.
Henceforward let the laws of nations cease ;
And let the pale, that severs right and wrong,
Things sacred and profane, be broken down ;
Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,
Are not in safety, while Orestes lives.
Oh, never more shall my torn mind be heal'd,
Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose !

A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,
And lay strong siege to my distracted soul.

Enter PYLADES, attended by Greeks.

Pyl. Haste, prince; let us begone: 'tis death to stay.

Andromache reigns queen: she gives the alarm,
And vows revenge upon the foes of Pyrrhus.
The people arm and muster in the streets:
Our Greeks will not be able long to guard
The palace gates, and to secure our flight.
We must be speedy, sir.

Orest. You may depart,
My friends——Hermione and I remain——
Her cruelty has quite undone me!——“Go
“And leave me to myself——I'll find her out.”

Pyl. Alas, unhappy prince! she's no more;
“Forget her, sir, and save yourself with us.”

Orest. Hermione no more!—Oh, all ye powers!

Pyl. Full of disorder, wildness in her looks,
With hands expanded, and dishevell'd hair,
Breathless and pale, with shrieks she sought the temple;
In the mid-way she met the corpse of Pyrrhus;
She startled at the sight; then, stiff with horror,
Gaz'd frightful: waken'd from the dire amaze,
She rais'd her eyes to heav'n with such a look
As spoke her sorrows, and reproach'd the gods:
Then plung'd a poinard deep within her breast,
And fell on Pyrrhus, grasping him in death.

Orest. I thank you, gods—I never could expect
To be so wretched—You have been industrious

To finish your decrees ; to make Orestes
A dreadful instance of your power to punish.
I'm singled out to bear the wrath of heav'n.

Pyl. You hazard your retreat by these delays.
The guards will soon beset us. Your complaints
Are vain, and may be fatal.

Orest. True, my friend :
And therefore 'twas I thank'd the bounteous gods.
My fate's accomplish'd—I shall die content.
Oh, bear me hence—blow, winds !—

Pyl. Let us be gone.

Orest. The murder'd lovers wait me—Hark, they
call !

Nay, if your blood still reeks, I'll mingle mine :
One tomb will hold us all,

Pyl. Alas ! I fear
His ravings will return with his misfortunes.

Orest. I am dizzy !—Clouds !—Quite lost in utter
darkness.

Guide me, some friendly pilot, through the storm.
I shiver ! Oh, I freeze !—So ;—Light returns ;
'Tis the grey dawn !—See, Pylades !—Behold !—
I am encompass'd with a sea of blood !—
The crimson billows !—Oh ! my brain's on fire !

Pyl. How is it, sir ?—Repose yourself on me.

Orest. Pyrrhus, stand off !—What would'st thou ?—
How he glares !

What envious hand has clos'd thy wounds ?—Have at
thee.

It is Hermione that strikes—Confusion !
She catches Pyrrhus in her arms.—Oh, save me !
How terrible she looks ! She knits her brow !

She frowns me dead ! She frights me into madness !
Where am I ?—Who are you ?

Pyl. Alas, poor prince !

“ Help to support him.—How he pants for breath !”

Orest. This is most kind, my Pylades—Oh, why,
Why was I born to give thee endless trouble ?

Pyl. All will go well ; he settles into reason.

Orest. Who talks of reason ? Better to have none
Than not enough.—Run, some one, tell my Greeks,
I will not have them touch the king.—Now—now
I blaze again !—See there !—Look where they come ;
A shoal of furies—How they swarm about me !—
My terror !—Hide me !—Oh, their snaky locks !
Hark, how they hiss !—See, see the flaming brands !
Now they let drive full at me !—How they grin,
And shake their iron whips !—My ears ! what yelling !
And see, Hermione !—She sets them on—
Thrust not your scorpions thus into my bosom !
Oh !—I am stung to death !—Dispatch me soon !
There—take my heart, Hermione !—Tear it out !
Disjoin me ! kill me ! Oh, my tortur'd soul !—

Pyl. Kind Heav'n restore him to his wonted calm !
Oft have I seen him rave : but never thus :
Quite spent !—Assist me, friends, to bear him off.
Our time is short : should his strong rage return,
'Twould be beyond our power to force him hence,
Away, my friends ! I hear the portal open. [*Ex.*

Enter PHOENIX, attended by Guards.

Phan. All, all are fled !—Orestes is not here—
Triumphant villains !—The base, giddy rabble,

Whose hands should all have been employ'd with fire,
To waste the fleet, flock'd round the dying princess;
And, while they stand agaze, the Greeks embark.
Oh, 'tis too plain!—this sacrilegious murder
Was authoriz'd.—Th' ambassador's escape
Declares his guilt.—Most bloody embassy!
Most unexampled deed!—Where, where, ye gods,
Is majesty secure, if in your temples
You give it no protection!—See, the queen.

[A Flourish of Trumpets.]

Enter ANDROMACHE and CEPHISA.

Andr. Yes, ye inhuman Greeks! the time will come
When you shall dearly pay your bloody deeds!
How should the Trojans hope for mercy from you,
When thus you turn your impious rage on Pyrrhus;
Pyrrhus, the bravest man in all your league;
The man whose single valour made you triumph.

[A dead March behind.]

Is my child there?—

Ceph. It is the corpse of Pyrrhus.

The weeping soldiers bear him on their shields.

Andr. Ill-fated prince! too negligent of life:
And too unwary of the faithless Greeks!
Cut off in the fresh rip'ning prime of manhood,
Even in the pride of life: thy triumphs new,
And all thy glories in full blossom round thee!
The very Trojans would bewail thy fate.

Ceph. Alas, then, will your sorrows never end!

Andr. Oh, never, never!—While I live, my tears
Will never cease; for I was born to grieve.—

Give present orders for the fun'ral pomp : [To Phoenix]
Let him be rob'd in all his regal state ;
Place round him ev'ry shining mark of honour :
And let the pile, that consecrates his ashes,
Rise like his fame, and blaze above the clouds.

[A Flourish of Trumpets.]

Ceph. That sound proclaims th' arrival of the prince,
The guards conduct him from the citadel.

Andr. With open arms I'll meet him !—Oh, Cep-
hisa !

A springing joy, mixt with a soft concern,
A pleasure which no language can express,
An extacy that mothers only feel,
Plays round my heart, and brightens up my sorrow,
Like gleams of sunshine in a low'ring sky.

Though plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,
Yet never let the noble mind despair :
When prest by dangers and beset with foes,
The gods their timely succour interpose ;
And when our virtue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with grief,
By unforeseen expedients brings relief.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. BUDGELL,

Of the Inner Temple.

Spoken by Andromache.

*I Hope you'll own, that with becoming art,
I've play'd my game, and topp'd the widow's part .
My spouse, poor man, could not live out the play,
But dy'd commodiously on his wedding-day ;
While I, his reliâ, made at one bold fling,
Myself a princess, and young Sty a king.*

*You, ladies, who protract a lover's pain,
And hear your servants sigh whole years in vain ;
Which of you all would not on marriage venture,
Might she so soon upon her jointure enter ?*

*'Twas a strange scape ! Had Pyrrbus liv'd till now,
I had been finely hamper'd in my vow.
To die by one's own hand, and fly the charms
Of love and life in a young monarch's arms !
'Twere an hard fate——ere I had undergone it,
I might have took one night——to think upon it.*

*But why, you'll say, was all this grief express'd
For a first husband, laid long since at rest ?*

*Why so much coldness to my kind protector ?
 — Ah, ladies ! had you known the good man Hector !
 Homer will tell you, (or I'm misinform'd,)
 That, when enrag'd, the Grecian camp he storm'd ;
 To break the ten-fold barriers of the gate,
 He threw a stone of such prodigious weight
 As no two men could lift, not even of those,
 Who in that age of thund'ring mortals rose :
 — It would have sprain'd a dozen modern beaux.*

*At length, howe'er, I laid my weeds aside,
 And sunk the widow in the well-dress'd bride.
 In you it still remains to grace the play,
 And bless with joy my coronation day ;
 Take, then, ye circles of the brave and fair,
 The fatherless and widow to your care.*



Act IV.

DOUGLAS.



De Wilde ad viv. pinx.

Ferguson sculp.

M^r. HOLMAN as DOUGLAS.

— Say who was my Father ?

Dublin Published by W. Jones N^o. 86 Dame Street.

BRITISH THEATRE



DOUGLAS.

in the smooth green turf

He set the figure of the marshy land

Graham del.

Ferguson sculp.

Dublin Published by W. Jones N° 26, Dame Street.



DOUGLAS.

A

TRAGEDY.

BY JOHN HOME.

*Author of
"Douglas"*

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

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"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCII.

DOUGLAS

YCLDART

BY JOHN HOME.

804 417 601



ELIGATED FROM THE FRONT-ROCK

The Provision of the Mississippi.

The following table presents the results of the regression analysis.

471950

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FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 26, DAME STREET.

1728544

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
GEORGE
PRINCE OF WALES.

SIR,

IN Dedications, especially those which Poets write, Mankind expect to find little Sentiment, and less Truth. A grateful Imagination adorns its Benefactor with every Virtue, and even flatters with Sincerity. Hence the Portrait of each Patron of the Muses is drawn with the same Outline, and finished as a Model of Perfection. Instructed by the Errors of others, I presume not to make the Panegyrick of the Prince of WALES, nor to extol the Patronage of Literature as the most shining Quality of a Prince. Your Royal Highness will permit me to mention one sort of Patronage which can never be praised too much; that, I mean, which extending its Influence to the whole Society, forms and excites the Genius of Individuals by exalting the Spirit of the State.

Institutions, that revive, in a great and highly civilized People those Virtues of Courage, Manhood, and Love of their Country, which are most apt, in the Progress of Refinement, to decay, produce at the same

time that pleasing and ornamental Genius, which cannot subsist in a Mind that does not partake of those Qualities which it describes. This is an Observation which has escaped the Notice of the greater Part of Writers, who have inquired into the causes of the Growth and Decay of Poetry and Eloquence; but it has not escaped the Penetration of LONGINUS, who writing in the Decline of the ROMAN Empire, and lamenting that the true Sublime was not to be found in the Works of his Time, boldly imputes that Defect to the Change of Policy; and enumerates with Indignation the Vices of Avarice, Effeminacy, and Pusillanimity, which, arising from the Loss of Liberty, had so enthralled and debased the Minds of Men, that they could not look up, as he calls it, to any thing elevated and sublime: And here, as in other Questions, the great Critic quotes the Authority of his Master HOMER. The Day of Slavery bereaves a Man of half his Virtue. The Experience of succeeding Times has shewn that Genius is affected by Changes. less violent than the Loss of Liberty; that it ever flourishes in Times of Vigour and Enterprize, and languishes amidst the sure Corruption of an inactive Age.

Your Royal Highness, as Heir Apparent of the British Empire, hath in view the noblest Field that ever a laudable Ambition entered. The envied State of this Nation cannot remain precisely as it is; the

*Tide must flow, or ebb faster than it has ever flowed.
A Prince destined in such a Period to reign, begins a
memorable Era of Perfection or Degeneracy. The
serious Cares and princely Studies of your Youth,
the visible Tenor of your generous and constant
Mind, have filled the Breasts of all good Men with
hopes of you, equal to their Wishes. That these
Hopes may be fulfilled in their utmost Extent, is the
sincere and ardent Prayer of*

Your Royal Highness's

Most humble

Most obedient,

And most devoted Servant,

JOHN HOME.

JOHN HOME.

THE Author of the Tragedy of *Douglas* was originally designed for the Ministry—The *Biographia* remarks, that looking upon Tragedy as a Moral Poem, inculcating the purest principles of Religion, he did not imagine the particular designation of his life as at all exempting him from thus indulging in the strong bent of Genius:—He accordingly composed the Tragedy of *Douglas*.

The Kirk of Scotland however, conscientiously no doubt, endeavoured to win over this stray child from presumed perdition, and finding him resolutely bent upon standing the hazard of the die, they charitably persecuted not merely himself, but those who encouraged our young Bard.

If he bore up against all this inveterate wrong, he had the success of his piece to console him for what he might lose, and what was certainly better still for HOME, the attention of the Earl of BUTE, who, like a true *Mæcenas*, introduced him to the

knowledge of his AUGUSTUS, our present gracious SOYEREIGN, then Prince of Wales; this assured Mr HOME the comforts of a *pension*, and we believe a *place*.—He “has kept the noiseless “tenour of his way,” known only to his Friends and to the Muses.

The following are his Dramas:

1 DOUGLAS, printed	1757	4 FATAL DISCOVERY	1760
2 AGES - -	1758	5 ALONZA - -	1773
3 SIEGE OF AQUILEIA	1760	6 ALFRED - -	1778

DOUGLAS.

MR. GRAY offers an opinion upon this tragedy so consonant with that of the present writer, that he claims permission to cite it, as, poetically, an authority perhaps the *highest*. "I am greatly struck with "the tragedy of Douglas, though it has infinite faults: "the author seems to have retrieved the true language of the stage, which had been lost for these "hundred years; and there is one scene between Matilda and the old peasant so masterly, that it strikes "me blind to all the defects in the world."

This tragedy abounds in nervous picturesque and pathetic writing; the chief incidents are extracted from an antient Scottish Ballad, entitled CHILD MAURICE.—To supply curiosity with a reference at hand, it is here printed correctly:—

CHILD MAURICE.

CHILD MAURICE was an erle's son
 His name it waxed wide;
 It was nae for his great riches,
 Nor yit his meikle pride,
 But for his dame, a lady gay
 Wha livd on Carron side.

Whar fall I get a bonny boy
 That will win hose and shoen,
 ' That will gae to lord Barnard's ha,
 And bid his lady come ?

' And ye mann rin errand Willie,
 ' And ye maun rin wi speid ;
 ' When ither boys gang on their feet
 ' Ye fall ha prancing steid.

" O no ! oh no ! my master deir !
 " I dar na for my life ;
 " I'll no gae to the bauld barons,
 " For to triest furth his wife."

" My bird Willie, my boy Willie,
 ' My deir Willie, he said,
 ' How can ye strive against the streim ?
 For I fall be obey'd."

" But O my master deir ! he cryd,
 In grenewode ye're your lane ;
 " Gi' ower sic thochts I wald ye red,
 " For feir ye fold be tane."

' Haste, haste, I say, gae to the ha,
 ' Bid her come here wi speid ;
 If ye refuse my hie command,
 ' I'll gar your body bleid.

' Gae bid her tak this gay mantel,
 ' Tis a gowd bot the hem ;
 ' Bid her come to the gude grenewode,
 ' Ein by hersel alane ;

' And there it is, a filken fark,
 ' Her ain hand sowl the fleive;
 ' And bid her come to Child Maurice;
 ' Speir nae bauld baron's leive.

" Yes I will gae your black errand,
 " Thouch it be to your cost;
 " Sen ye will nae be warnd by me,
 " In it ye fall find frost.

" The baron he's a man o' micht,
 " He neir could bide to taunt;
 " And ye will see before its nicht,
 " Sma cause ye ha' to vaunt.

" And sen I maun your errand rin,
 " Sae fair against my will,
 " I'll mak a vow, and keip it trow,
 " It fall be done for ill.

Whan he cam to the broken brig,
 He bent his bow and swam;
 And whan he cam to grafs growing,
 Sat down his feet and ran.

And whan he cam to Barnard's yeat,
 Wold neither chap nor ca,
 But set his bent bow to his breist,
 And lichtly lap the wa.

He wald na tell the man his errand
 Thoch he stude at the yeat;
 But straight into the ha he cam,
 Whar they were set at meat.

- ' Hail ! hail ! my gentle fire and dame
 ' My message winna wait,
 ' Dame, ye maun to the grenewode gae,
 ' Afore that it be late.
 ' Ye're bidden tak this gay mantel;
 ' Tis a gowd bot the hem :
 ' Ye maun haste to the gude grenewode,
 ' Ein by yoursel alane.
 ' And there it is, a silken fark,
 ' Your ain hand sewd the sleive ;
 ' Ye maun gae speik to Child Maurice;
 ' Speir nae bauld baron's leive."

The lady stamped wi her foot,
 And winked wi her eie;
 But a that she cold say or do,
 Forbidden he wald nae be.

- " It's surely to my bower-woman,
 " It neir cold be to me."
 ' I brocht it to lord Barnard's lady,
 ' I trow that ye be shee."

Then up and spak the wylie nurse,
 (The bairn upon her knie,)
 " If it be cum from Child Maurice
 " It's deir welcum to me."

- ' Ye lie, ye lie, ye filthy nurse,
 ' Sae loud as I heir ye lie ;
 ' I brocht it to lord Barnard's lady
 ' I trow ye be nae shee."

Then up and spake the bauld baron,
 An angry man was he :
 He has tane the table wi his foot,
 Sae has he wi his knie,
 Till crystal cup and ezar dish
 In flinders he gard flie.

" Gae bring a robe of your cliding,
 " Wi a the haste ye can,
 " And I'll gae to the gude grenewode,
 " And speik wi your leman."

" O bide at hame now lord Barnard !
 " I ward ye bide at hame ;
 " Neir wyte a man for violence,
 " Wha neir wyte ye wi nane."

Child Maurice sat in the grenewode,
 He whistled and he sang :

" O what meins a the folk coming ?
 " My mother tarries lang."

The baron to the grenewode cam,
 Wi meikle dule and care ;
 And there he first spyd Child Maurice,
 Kaming his yellow hair.

" Nae wonder, nae wonder, Child Maurice,
 " My lady loes thee weil :
 " The fairest part of my body
 " Is blacker than thy heil.

Yet neir the less now, Child Maurice,
 For a thy great bewtie,

" Ye fe rew the day ye eir was born;
 ' That head fall gae wi me."

Now he has drawn his trusty brand,
 And flaided ovr the strae;
 And through Child Maurice fair body
 He gar'd the could iron gae.

And he has tane Child Maurice heid,
 And fet it on a speir;
 The meifest man in a his train,
 Has gotten that heid to beir.

And he has tane Child Maurice up,
 Laid him across his steid;
 And brocht him to his painted bower
 And laid him on a bed.

The lady on the castle wa
 Beheld baith dale and down;
 And there she saw Child Maurice heid
 Cum trailing to the toun.

" Better I loe that bluidy heid,

" Bot and that yellow hair,

" Than lord Barnard and a his lands

" As they lig here and there."

And she has tane Child Maurice heid
 And kissed baith cheik and chin;

" I was ang fow of Child Maurice "

" As the hip is o the stane.

" I gat ye in my father's house

" Wi meikle sin and shame;

" I brocht ye up in the grenewode
 " Ken'd to mysel alane :

" Aft have I by thy craddle sitten,
 " And fondly sein thee sleip;
 " But now I maun gae 'bout thy grava
 " A mother's teirs to weip."

Again she kiss'd his bluidy cheik,
 Again his bluidy chin;
 " O better I looped my son Maurice,
 " Than a my kyth and kin !"

" Awa, awa, ye ill woman,
 " An ill dethe may ye die !
 " Gin I had ken'd he was your son
 " He had neir bein slayne by me."

" Obraid me not, my lord Barnard !
 " Obraid me not for shame !
 " Wi that sam speir, O perce my heart,
 " And save me frae my pain !"

" Since naething but Child Maurice heid
 " Thy jealous rage cold quell
 " Let that same hand now tak her lyfe,
 " That neir to thee did ill."

" To me nae after days nor nchts
 " Will eir be fast or kind :
 " I'll fill the air with heavy ficks,
 " And greit till I be blind."

" Eneuch of bluid by me's been spilt,
 " Seck not your dethe frae me :

• I'd rather far it had been mysel,
• Than either him or thee.

• Wi hopeleß wae I hear your plaint,
• Sair, sair, I rue the deid:—
That eir this curf'd hand of mine
• Sold gar his body bleid !

• Dry up your teirs, my winsome dame,
• They neir can heal the wound;
• Ye see his heid upon the speir,
• His heart's bluid on the ground.
• I curse the hand that did the deid,
• The heart that thocht the ill,
• The feet that bare me wi sic speld,
• The comely youth to kill.

• I'll aye lament for Child Maurice
• As gin he war my ain;
• I'll neir forget the dreiry day
• On which the youth was slain.

PROLOGUE.

*IN antient times, when Britain's trade was arms,
And the lov'd music of her youth, alarms;
A godlike race sustain'd fair England's fame:
Who has not heard of gallant PIERCY's name?
Ay, and of DOUGLAS? Such illustrious foes
In rival Rome and Carthage never rose!
From age to age bright shone the British fire,
And every hero was a hero's fire.
When powerful fate decreed one warrior's doom,
Up sprung the phoenix from his parent's tomb.
But whilst those generous rivals fought and fell,
Those generous rivals lov'd each other well:
Tho' many a bloody field was lost and won,
Nothing in hate, in honour all was done.
When PIERCY wrong'd, defy'd his prince or peers,
Fast came the DOUGLAS with his Scottish spears;
And, when proud DOUGLAS made his King his foe,
For DOUGLAS, PIERCY bent his English bow.
Expell'd their native homes by adverse fate,
They knock'd alternate at each other's gate:
Then blaz'd the castle, at the midnight hour,
For him whose arms had shook its firmest tow'r.*

*This night a DOUGLAS your protection claims ;
 A wife ! a mother ! Pity's softest names :
 The story of her woes indulgent hear,
 And grant your suppliant all she begs, a tear.
 In confidence she begs ; and hopes to find
 Each English breast, like noble PIERCY's, kind.*

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN AT EDINBURGH.

*IN days of classic fame, when Persia's Lord
Oppos'd his millions to the Grecian sword,
Flourish'd the state of Athens, small her store,
Rugged her soil, and rocky was her shore,
Like Caledonia's : yet she gain'd a name
That stands unrival'd in the rolls of fame.*

*Such proud pre-eminence not valour gave,
(For who than Sparta's dauntless sons more brave?)
But learning, and the love of every art,
That virgin Pallas and the Muse impart.*

*Above the rest the Tragic Muse admir'd
Each Attic breast with noblest passions fir'd.
In peace their poets with their heroes shar'd
Glory, the hero's, and the bard's reward.
The Tragic Muse each glorious record kept,
And, o'er the kings she conquer'd, Athens wept*.*

*Here let me cease, impatient for the scene,
To you I need not praise the Tragic Queen :
Oft has this audience soft compassion shown
To woes of heroes, heroes not their own.*

* See the PERSAI of Æschylus.

*This night our scenes no common tear demand,
He comes, the hero of your native land !
DOUGLAS, a name thro' all the world renown'd,
A name that rouses like the trumpet's sound !
Oft have your fathers, prodigal of life,
A DOUGLAS follow'd thro' the bloody strife ;
Hosts have been known at that dread name to yield,
And, DOUGLAS dead, his name hath won the field.*

*Listen attentive to the various tale,
Mark if the author's kindred feelings fail ;
Sway'd by alternate hopes, alternate fears,
He waits the test of your congenial tears.
If they shall flow, back to the muse he flies,
And bids your heroes in succession rise ;
Collects the wand'ring warriors as they roam,
DOUGLAS assures them of a welcome home.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

LORD RANDOLPH	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
GLENALVON	-	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
NORVAL	-	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
DOUGLAS	-	-	-	Mr. Bensley.

Women.

LADY RANDOLPH	-	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.
ANNA	-	-	-	Mrs. Ward.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

LORD RANDOLPH	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
GLENALVON	-	-	-	Mr. Hailey.
NORVAL	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
DOUGLAS	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.

Women.

LADY RANDOLPH	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
ANNA	-	-	-	Mrs. Rock.

DOUGLAS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Court of a Castle, surrounded with Woods. Enter
Lady RANDOLPH.*

Lady Randolph.

YE woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewel a while : I will not leave you long ;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells,
Who from the chiding stream, or groaning oak,
Still hears and answers to Matilda's moan.
Oh, Douglas ! Douglas ! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,
Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals hear'st
My lamentation : hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.
My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn
Who perish'd with thee on this fatal day.—

To thee I lift my voice ; to thee address
The plaint which mortal ear has never heard.
O disregard me not ; tho' I'm call'd
Another's now, my heart is wholly thine.
Incapable of change, affection lies
Buried, my Douglas, in thy bloody grave.
But Randolph comes, whom fate has made my lord,
To chide my anguish, and defraud the dead.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Again these weeds of woe ! say, dost thou
well

To feed a passion which consumes thy life ?
The living claim some duty ; vainly thou
Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.

Lady R. Silent, alas ! is he for whom I mourn :
Childless, without memorial of his name,
He only now in my remembrance lives.

“ This fatal day stirs my time-settled sorrow,

“ Troubles afresh the fountain of my heart.

“ *Lord R.* When was it pure of sadness ! These
black weeds

“ Express the wonted colour of thy mind,

“ For ever dark and dismal. Seven long years

“ Are pass'd, since we were join'd by sacred ties :

“ Clouds all the while have hung upon thy brow,

“ Nor broke, nor parted by one gleam of joy.”

Time, that wears out the trace of deepest anguish,

“ As the sea smoothes the prints made in the sand,”

Has pass'd o'er thee in vain.

“ *Lady R.* If time to come

“ Should prove as ineffectual, yet, my lord,

" Thou can'st not blame me. When our Scottish youth

" Vy'd with each other for my luckless love,

" Oft I besought them, I implor'd them all

" Not to assail me with my father's aid,

" Nor blend their better destiny with mine.

" For melancholy had congeal'd my blood,

" And froze affection in my chilly breast.

" At last my Sire, rous'd with the base attempt

" To force me from him, which thou rend'red'st vain,

" To his own daughter bow'd his hoary head,

" Besought me to commiserate his age,

" And vow'd he should not, could not die in peace,

" Unless he saw me wedded, and secur'd

" From violence and outrage. Then, my lord !

" In my extreme distress I call'd on thee,

" Thee I bespake, profess'd my strong desire

" To lead a single, solitary life,

" And begg'd thy Nobleness, not to demand

" Her for a wife whose heart was dead to love.

" How thou persisted'st after this, thou know'st,

" And must confess that I am not unjust,

" Nor more to thee than to myself injurious.

" *Lord R.* That I confess ; yet ever must regret

" The grief I cannot cure." Would thou wert not

" Compos'd of grief and tenderness alone,

" But had'st a spark of other passions in thee,

" Pride, anger, vanity, the strong desire

" Of admiration, dear to woman-kind ;

" These might contend with, and allay thy grief,

" As meeting tides and currents smooth our firth.

Lady R. To such a cause the human mind oft
owes

"Its transient calm, a calm I envy not."

Lord R. Sure thou art not the daughter of Sir Malcolm :

Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment :
For when thy brother fell, he smil'd to hear
That Douglas' son in the same field was slain.

Lady R. Oh ! rake not up the ashes of my fathers :
Implacable resentment was their crime, 81
And grievous has the expiation been.

Contending with the Douglas, gallant lives
Of either house were lost ; my ancestors
Compell'd, at last, to leave their ancient seat
On Tiviot's pleasant banks ; and now, of them
No heir is left. Had they not been so stern,
I had not been the last of all my race.

Lord R. Thy grief wrests to its purposes my words.
I never ask'd of thee that ardent love
Which in the breasts of fancy's children burns.
Decent affection and complacent kindness
Were all I wish'd for ; but I wish'd in vain.
Hence with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land :
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
Matilda would not shed one tear the more.

Lady R. Thou dost not think so : woeful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues.
But whither go'st thou now ?

Lord R. Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on the tip-toe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks

Each who arrives, if he is come to tell
The Danes are landed.

Lady R. O, may adverse winds,
Far from the coast of Scotland, drive their fleet !
And every foldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his pleasant home !

Lord R. Thou speak'st a woman's, hear a warrior's
with :

Right from their native land, the stormy north,
May the wind blow, till every keel is fix'd
Immoveable in Caledonia's strand !
Then shall our foes repent their bold invasion,
And roving armies shun the fatal shore.

Lady R. " War I detest : but war with foreign foes,
" Whose manners, language, and whose looks are
strange,

" Is not so horrid, nor to me so hateful,
" As that which with our neighbours oft we wage.
" A river here, there an ideal line,
" By fancy drawn, divide the sister kingdoms,
" On each side dwells a people similar,
" As twins are to each other ; valiant both ;
" Both for their valour famous thro' the world.
" Yet will they not unite their kindred arms,
" And, if they must have war, wage distant war,
" But with each other fight in cruel conflict.
" Gallant in strife, and noble in their ire,
" The battle is their pastime. They go forth
" Gay in the morning, as to summer sport ;
" When ev'ning comes, the glory of the morn,
" The youthful warrior is a clod of clay.
" Thus fall the prime of either hapless land ;

"And such the fruit of Scotch and English wars.

"*Lord R.* I'll hear no more : this melody would make

"A soldier drop his sword, and doff his arms,

"Sit down and weep the conquests he has made ;

"Yea, (like a monk), sing rest and peace in heav'n

"To souls of warriors in his battles slain."

Lady, farewell : I leave thee not alone ; 220

Yonder comes one whose love makes duty light.

[*Exit.*

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Forgive the rashness of your Anna's love :

Urg'd by affection, I have thus presum'd

To interrupt your solitary thoughts ;

And warn you of the hours that you neglect,

And lose in sadness.

Lady R. So to lose my hours

Is all the use I wish to make of time.

Anna. To blame thee, lady, suits not with my state :

But sure I am, since death first prey'd on man,

Never did sister thus a brother mourn.

What had your sorrows been if you had lost,

In early youth, the husband of your heart ?

Lady R. Oh !

Anna. Have I distress'd you with officious love,

And ill-tim'd mention of your brother's fate ?

Forgive me, Lady : humble though I am,

The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune :

So fervently I love you, that to dry

These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away. 240

Lady R. What power directed thy unconscious
tongue
To speak as thou hast done? to name—

Anna. I know not :
But since my words have made my mistress tremble,
I will speak so no more : but silent mix
My tears with hers.

Lady R. No, thou shalt not be silent.
I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
Henceforth th' instructed partner of my woes.
But what avails it? Can thy feeble pity
Roll back the flood of never-ebbing time?
Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead alive?

Anna. What means my noble mistress?

Lady R. Did'st thou not ask what had my sorrows
been,
If I in early youth had lost a husband?—
In the cold bosom of the earth is lodg'd,
Mangl'd with wounds, the husband of my youth;
And in some cavern of the ocean lies
My child and his.—— 260

Anna. Oh Lady most rever'd!
The tale wrapt up in your amazing words
Deign to unfold.

Lady R. Alas! an ancient feud,
Hereditary evil, was the source
Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decreed,
That my brave brother should in battle save
The life of Douglas' son, our house's foe:
The youthful warriors vow'd eternal friendship.

To see the vaunted sister of his friend,
 Impatient, Douglas to Balarmo came,
 Under a borrow'd name.—My heart he gain'd;
 Nor did I long refuse the hand he begg'd:
 My brother's presence authoris'd our marriage.
 Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of down,
 Had o'er us flown, when my lov'd lord was call'd
 To fight his father's battles; and with him,
 In spite of all my tears, did Malcolm go.
 Scarce were they gone, when my stern fire was told
 That the false stranger was lord Douglas' son.
 Frantic with rage, the baron drew his sword
 And question'd me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
 Kneeling beneath his sword, fault'ring I took
 An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
 Wed one of Douglas' name. Sincerity!
 Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
 Thy onward path, although the earth should gape,
 And from the gulph of hell destruction cry,
 To take dissimulation's winding way.

Anna. Alas! how few of woman's fearful kind
 Durst own a truth so hardy!

Lady R. The first truth
 Is easiest to avow. This moral learn,
 This precious moral from my tragic tale.—
 In a few days the dreadful tidings came
 That Douglas and my brother both were slain.
 My lord! my life! my husband! mighty God!
 What had I done to merit such affliction?

Anna. My dearest lady! many a tale of tears
 I've listen'd to; but never did I hear
 A tale so sad as this. 300

Lady R. In the first days
Of my distracting grief, I found myself—
As women wish to be who love their lords.
But who durst tell my father? The good priest
Who join'd our hands, my brother's ancient tutor,
With his lov'd Malcolm, in the battle fell :
They two alone were privy to the marriage.
On silence and concealment I resolv'd,
Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
That very night on which my son was born,
My nurse, the only confident I had,
Set out with him to reach her sister's house :
But nurse, nor infant have I ever seen,
Or heard of, Anna, since that fatal hour.
“ My murder'd child !—had thy fond Mother fear'd
“ The loss of thee, she had loud fame defy'd,
“ Despis'd her father's rage, her father's grief,
“ And wander'd with thee through the scorning
“ world.”

Anna. Not seen nor heard of! then perhaps he lives.

Lady R. No. It was dark December; wind and rain
Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay
The destin'd road; and in its swelling flood
My faithful servant perish'd with my child.
“ Oh! hapless son of a most hapless sire!
“ But they are both at rest; and I alone
“ Dwell in this world of woe, condemn'd to walk,
“ Like a guilt-troubled ghost, my painful rounds;”
Nor has despiteful fate permitted me
The comfort of a solitary sorrow.
Though dead to love, I was compell'd to wed
Randolph, who snatch'd me from a villain's arms;

And Randolph now possesses the domains,
That by Sir Malcolm's death on me devolv'd ;
Domains, that should to Douglas' son have giv'n
A baron's title and a baron's power.

" Such were my soothing thoughts, while I bewail'd

" The slaughter'd father of a son unborn.

" And when that son came, like a ray from heav'n,

" Which shines and disappears ; alas ; my child !

" How long did thy fond mother grasp the hope

" Of having thee, she knew not how, restor'd.

" Year after year hath worn her hope away ;

" But left still undiminish'd her desire.

" *Anna.* The hand that spins th' uneven thread of
life,

" May smooth the length that's yet to come of yours.

" *Lady R.* Not in this world ; I have consider'd well

" It's various evils, and on whom they fall.

" Alas ! how oft does goodness wound itself ?

" And sweet affection prove the spring of woe."

Oh ! had I died when my lov'd husband fell !

Had some good angel op'd to me the book

Of Providence, and let me read my life,

My heart had broke, when I beheld the sum

Of ills, which one by one I have endur'd.

Anna. That God, whose ministers good angels are,
Hath shut the book, in mercy to mankind ;
But we must leave this theme : Glenalvon comes ;
I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes,
And hitherwards he slowly stalks his way.

Lady R. I will avoid him. An ungracious person
Is doubly irksome in an hour like this.

Anna. Why speaks my lady thus to Randolph's heir?

Lady R. Because he's not the heir of Randolph's virtues.

Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind
An artificial image of himself;
And he with ease can vary to the taste
Of different men, its features. "Self-denied,
"And master of his appetites he seems:
"But his fierce nature, like a fox chain'd up,
"Watches to seize unseen the wish'd-for prey.
"Never were vice and virtue pois'd so ill,
"As in Glenalvon's unrelenting mind."
Yet is he brave and politic in war,
And stands aloft in these unruly times.
Why I describe him thus I'll tell hereafter.
Stay, and detain him till I reach the castle.

[*Exit. Lady RANDOLPH.*]

Anna. Oh happiness! where art thou to be found?
I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
Tho' grac'd with grandeur and in wealth array'd:
Nor dost thou, it would seem with virtue dwell;
Else had this gentle lady miss'd thee not.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. What dost thou muse on, meditating maid?
Like some entranc'd and visionary seer,
On earth thou stand'st, thy thoughts ascend to heaven.

Anna. Would that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a
seer,
To have my doubts by heavenly vision clear'd!

Glen. What dost thou doubt of? What hast thou
to do

With subjects intricate? Thy youth, thy beauty,
Cannot be question'd: think of these good gifts;
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.

Anna. Let women view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty: who so fair as she?
But I must follow; this revolving day
Awakes the mem'ry of her antient woes. *Exit ANNA.*

Glen. [*solus*] So!—Lady Randolph shuns me; by
and by

I'll woo her as the lion wooes his brides.
The deed's a doing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich valleys, and a chief of pow'r
The season is most apt; my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
Randolph has liv'd too long: his better fate
Had the ascendant once, and kept me down:
When I had seiz'd the dame, by chance he came,
Rescu'd, and had the lady for his labour;
I escap'd unknown; a slender consolation!
Heav'n is my witness that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet I am not safe:
By love or something like it, stung, inflam'd,
Madly I blabb'd my passion to his wife,
And she has threaten'd to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know:
But well I know the Baron's wrath is deadly.
I will not live in fear: the man I dread
Is as a Dane to me: ay, and the man
Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire.

No bar but he ; she has no kinsman near ;
No brother in his sister's quarrel bold ; 419
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I know no chief that will defy Glenalvon. *Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Court, &c. Enter Servants and a Stranger at one door, and Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA at another.

Lady Randolph.

WHAT means this clamour ? Stranger, speak secure ;
Hast thou been wrong'd ? Have these rude men presum'd

To vex the weary traveller on his way ?

F. Ser. By us no stranger ever suffered wrong :
This man with outcry wild has called us forth ;
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

*Enter Lord RANDOLPH and a young man, with their
swords drawn and bloody.*

Lady R. Not vain the stranger's fears ! how fares
my lord.

Lord R. That it fares well, thanks to this gallant youth,

Whose valour sav'd me from a wretched death !
As down the winding dale I walk'd alone,
At the cross way four armed men attack'd me :
Rovers, I judge, from the licentious camp,
Who would have quickly laid lord Randolph low,
Had not this brave and generous stranger come,
Like my good angel, in the hour of fate,
And mocking danger, made my foes his own.
They turn'd upon him, but his active arm
Struck to the ground, from whence they rose no more,
The fiercest two ; the others fled again,
And left him master of the bloody field.
Speak, lady Randolph ; upon beauty's tongue
Dwell accents pleasing to the brave and bold.
Speak noble dame, and thank him for thy lord.

Lady R. My lord, I cannot speak what now I feel.
My heart o'erflows with gratitude to Heav'n,
And to this noble youth, who, all unknown
To you and yours, deliberated not,
Nor paus'd at peril, but, humanely brave,
Fought on your side against such fearful odds.
Have you not learn'd of him, whom we should thank ?
Whom call the saviour of lord Randolph's life ?

Lord R. I ask'd that question, and he answered not :
But I must know, who my deliverer is.

[*To the Stranger.*

Stran. A low-born man, of parentage obscure,
Who nought can boast but his desire to be
A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

Lord R. Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobl'd

By the great King of kings ! thou art ordain'd
And stamp'd a hero, by the sovereign hand
Of Nature ! blush not, flower of modesty
As well as valour, to declare thy birth.

Stran. My name is Norval : on the Grampion hills
My father feeds his flocks ; a frugal swain,
Whose constant cares were to increase his store,
And keep his only son, myself, at home.
For I had heard of battles, and I long'd
To follow to the field some warlike lord :
And Heav'n soon granted what my sire deny'd.
This moon which rose last night, round as my shield,
Had not yet fill'd her horns, when, by her light,
A band of fierce barbarians, from the hills,
Rush'd like a torrent down upon the vale,
Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled
For safety and for succour. I alone,
With bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,
Hover'd about the enemy, and mark'd
The road he took ; then hasted to my friends,
Whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men,
I met advancing. The pursuit I led.
'Till we o'ertook the spoil-incumber'd foe. 60
We fought and conquer'd. Ere a sword was drawn,
An arrow from my bow had pierc'd their chief,
Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.
Returning home in triumph, I disdain'd
The shepherd's slothful life ; and having heard
That our good king had summoned his bold peers
To lead their warriors to the Carron side,
I left my father's house, and took with me
A chosen servant to conduct my steps : —

Yon trembling coward, who forsook his master.
Journeying with this intent, I pass'd these towers,
And, Heaven-directed, came this day to do
The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

Lord Ran. He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehears'd ?
My brave deliverer ! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and in a monarch's fight
Contend with princes for the prize of fame.
I will present thee to our Scottish king,
Whose valiant spirit ever valour lov'd. 80

Ah ! my Matilda, wherefore starts that tear ?

Lady R. I cannot say : for various affections,
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell ;
Yet each of them may well command a tear.
I joy that thou art safe ; and I admire
Him and his fortunes, who hath wrought thy safety ;
Yea, as my mind predicts, with thine his own.
Obscure and friendless, he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolv'd to hunt for fame, and with his sword
To gain distinction which his birth denied.
In this attempt unknown he might have perish'd,
And gain'd with all his valour, but oblivion.
Now, grac'd by thee, his virtue serves no more
Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope
He stands conspicuous ; fame and great renown
Are brought within the compass of his sword ;
On this my mind reflected, whilst you spoke,
And bless'd the wonder-working Lord of Heaven.

Lord R. Pious and grateful eyes are thy thoughts !
My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.

Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon, 102
In honour and command shall Norval be.

Nor. I know not how to thank you. Rude I am,
In speech and manners : never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence : yet, my lord,
There's something in my breast, which makes me
bold

To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour.

Lady R. I will be sworn thou wilt not. Thou shalt be
My knight ; and ever, as thou didst to-day,
With happy valour guard the life of Randolph.

Lord R. Well hast thou spoke. Let me forbid reply.

[To NORVAL.

We are thy debtors still ! Thy high desert
O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
As was at first intended, to the camp.
Some of my train, I see, are speeding hither,
Impatient, doubtless, of their lord's delay.
Go with me, Norval, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,
Who languish for the fight, and beat the air 120
With brandish'd swords.

Nor. Let us begone, my lord.

Lord R. [To Lady RANDOLPH] About the time
that the declining sun

Shall his broad orbit o'er yon hills suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest ; my tent I pitch
Tomorrow in the field. Prepare the feast,
Free in his heart who for his country fights :
He in the eve of battle may resign
Himself to social pleasure : sweetest then,

When danger to a soldier's soul endears-
The human joy that never may return.

[*Exeunt RANDOLPH and NORVAL.*]

Lady R. His parting words have struck a fatal truth.
Oh, Douglas! Douglas! tender was the time
When we two parted, ne'er to meet again!
How many years of anguish and despair
Has Heaven annex'd to those swift-passing hours
Of love and fondness. "Then my bosom's flame
"Oft, as blown back by the rude breath of fear
"Return'd, and with redoubled ardour blaz'd." 140

Anna. May gracious Heav'n pour the sweet balm
of peace

Into the wounds that fester in your breast!
For earthly consolation cannot cure them.

Lady R. One only cure can Heav'n itself bestow;—
A grave—that bed in which the weary rest.
Wretch that I am! Alas! why am I so?
At every happy parent I repine!
How blest the mother of yon gallant Norval!
She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born:
She nurs'd her smiling infant on her breast;
Tended the child, and rear'd the pleasing boy:
She, with affection's triumph, saw the youth
In grace and comeliness surpass his peers:
Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,
And to the roaring waters gave my child.

Anna. Alas! alas! why will you thus resume
Your grief afresh; I thought that gallant youth
Would for a while have won you from your woe.
On him intent you gaz'd, with a look 160

Much more delighted, than your pensive eye
Has deign'd on other objects to bestow.

Lady R. Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even there
mine eye

Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow;
I thought, that had the son of Douglas liv'd,
He might have been like this young gallant stranger,
And pair'd with him in features and in shape.
In all endowments, as in years, I deem,
My boy with blooming Norval might have number'd.
Whilst thus I mus'd, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee, said I to myself,
With all my power, and grace with all my favour.

Anna. Sure Heav'n will bless so gen'rous a resolve.
You must, my noble dame, exert your power:
You must awake: devices will be fram'd,
And arrows pointed at the breast of Norval.

Lady R. Glenalvon's false and crafty head will work
Against a rival in his kinsman's love,
If I deter him not; I only can.

Bold as he is, Glenalvon will beware
How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.
I'll be the artist of young Norval's fortune.

" 'Tis pleasing to admire! most apt was I

" To this affection in my better days;

" Though now I seem to you shrunk up, retir'd

" Within the narrow compass of my woe.

" Have you not sometimes seen an early flower

" Open its bud, and spread its silken leaves,

"To catch sweet airs, and odours to bestow ;
"Then, by the keen blast nipt, pull in its leaves,
"And, though still living, die to scent and beauty ?
"Emblem of me ; affliction, like a storm,
"Hath kill'd the forward blossom of my heart."

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Where is my dearest kinsman, noble Randolph?

Lady R. Have you not heard, Glenalvon, of the
base—

Glen. I have ; and that the villains may not 'scape,
With a strong band I have begirt the wood. 180
If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,
And torture force from them th' important secret,
Whether some foe of Randolph hir'd their swords,
Or if——

Lady R. That care becomes a kinsman's love.
I have a counsel for Glenalvon's ear. [*Exit Anna*]

Glen. To him your counsels always are commands.

Lady R. I have not found so ; thou art known to me

Glen. Known !

Lady R. And most certain is my cause of knowledge.

Glen. What do you know ? By the most blessed cross,
You much amaze me. No created being,
Yourself except, durst thus accost Glenalvon.

Lady R. Is guilt so bold ? and dost thou make a
merit

Of thy pretended meekness ? This to me,
Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,
Have hitherto conceal'd what, if divulg'd,
Would make thee nothing : or, what's worse than that,

An outcast beggar, and unpitied too :
For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.

Glen. Thy virtue awes me. First of womankind !
Permit me yet to say, that the fond man
Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,
If he is brought by love to misery,
In fortune ruin'd, as in mind forlorn,
Unpitied cannot be. Pity's the alms
Which on such beggars freely is bestow'd ;
For mortals know that love is still their lord,
And o'er their vain resolves advances still :
As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves
Through the dry heath before the fanning wind.

Lady R. Reserve these accents for some other ear.
To love's apology I listen not.
Mark thou my words ; for it is meet thou shouldst.
His brave deliverer Randolph here retains.
Perhaps his presence may not please thee well ;
But, at thy peril, practise ought against him :
Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake
And loosen the good root he has in Randolph ;
Whose favourites I know thou hast supplanted.
Thou look'st at me, as if thou fain would'st pry
Into my heart. 'Tis open as my speech.
I give this early caution, and put on
The curb, before thy temper breaks away.
The friendless stranger my protection claims :
His friend I am, and be not thou his foe. [*Exit.*]

Glen. Child that I was to start at my own shadow,
And be the shallow fool of coward conscience !
I am not what I have been : what I should be.
The darts of destiny have almost pierc'd

My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith
In holy legends and religious tales,
I should conclude there was an arm above
That fought against me, and malignant turn'd,
To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.
Why, rape and murder are not simple means !
Th' imperfect-rape to Randolph gave a spouse ;
And the intended murder introduc'd
A favourite to hide the sun from me ;
And worst of all, a rival. Burning hell !
This were thy center, if I thought she loved him !
'Tis certain she contemns me ; nay, commands me,
And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,
In his behalf. And shall I thus be brav'd ?
Curb'd as she calls it, by dame Chastity ?
Infernal fiends, if any fiends there are
More fierce than hate, ambition, and revenge,
Rise up, and fill my bosom with your fires
" And policy remorseless ? Chance may spoil
" A single aim ; But perseverance must
" Prosper at last. For chance and fate are words :
" Persistent wisdom is the fate of man."
Darkly a project peers upon my mind,
Like the red moon when rising in the east,
Cross'd and divided by strange-colour'd clouds.
I'll seek the slave who came with Norval hither,
And for his cowardice was spurned from him.
I've known a follower's rankled bosom breed
Venom most fatal to his heedless lord.

Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Court, &c. as before. Enter ANNA.

Anna.

THY vassals, grief, great nature's order break,
And change the noon-tide to the midnight hour,
Whilst lady Randolph sleeps, I will walk forth,
And taste the air that breathes on yonder bank.
Sweet may her slumbers be ! Ye ministers
Of gracious Heaven who love the human race,
Angels and seraphs who delight in goodness !
Forake your skies, and to her couch descend !
There from her fancy chase those dismal forms
That haunt her waking ; her sad spirit charm
With images celestial, such as please
The blest above upon their golden beds.

Enter Servant.

Ser. One of the vile assassins is secur'd.
We found the villain lurking in the wood :
With dreadful imprecations he denies
All knowledge of the crime. But this is not

His first-essay : these jewels were conceal'd
In the most secret places of his garment ;
Belike the spoils of some that he has murder'd.

Anna. Let me look on them. Ha ! here is a heart,
The chosen crest of Douglas' valiant name ! 21
These are no vulgar jewels. Guard the wretch.

[*Exit Anna.*]

Enter Servants with a Prisoner.

Pris. I know no more than does the child unborn
Of what you charge me with.

1st Ser. You say so, Sir !

But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.
Behold the lady of lord Randolph comes :
Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Anna. Summon your utmost fortitude, before
You speak with him. Your dignity, your fame,
Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret,
Which in a moment from your lips may fly.

Lady R. Thou shalt behold me, with a desperate
heart,
Hear how my infant perish'd. See, he kneels.

[*The Prisoner kneels.*]

Pris. Heav'n bless that countenance so sweet and
mild !
A judge like thee makes innocence more bold,

Oh, save me, lady ! from these cruel men,
Who have attack'd and seiz'd me ; who accuse
Me of intended murder. As I hope
For mercy at the judgment-seat of Heaven, 40
The tender lamb, that never nipt the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.

Lady. R. Of this man's guilt what proof can ye produce ?

1st Ser. We found him lurking in the hollow glynn.
When view'd and call'd upon, amaz'd he fled,
We overtook him, and enquir'd from whence
And what he was ; he said he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfied with this, we search'd his clothes,
And found these jewels, whose rich value plead
Most pow'rfully against him. Hard he seems,
And old in villainy. Permit us try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.

Pris. Oh, gentle lady ! by your lord's dear life ;
Which these weak hands, I swear, did ne'er assail ;
And by your children's welfare, spare my age !
Let not the iron tear my ancient joints,
And my gray hairs bring to the grave with pain.

Lady R. Account for these ; thine own they cannot be :
For these, I say : be stedfast to the truth ; 60
Detested falsehood is most certain death.

[Anna removes the Servants and returns]

Pris. Alas ! I'm fore beset ! let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul !
Eternal justice is in this most just !
I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.

Lady R. Oh! Anna hear!—once more I charge thee
speak

The truth direct; for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration;
With which, if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.

Pris. Then, thus adjur'd, I'll speak to you as just
As if you were the minister of heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men:—
Some eighteen years ago I rented land
Of brave Sir Malcolm, then Balarino's lord;
But falling to decay, his servants seiz'd
All that I had, and then turn'd me and mine,
(Four helpless infants and their weeping mother)
Out to the mercy of the winter winds.

A little hovel by the river's side 80
Received us: there hard labour, and the skill
In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
Supported life. Whilst thus we poorly liv'd,
One stormy night, as I remember well,
The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof;
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.
At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
To where the circling eddy of a pool,
Beneath the ford, us'd oft to bring within
My reach, whatever floating thing the stream
Had caught. The voice was ceas'd; the person lost:
But looking sad and earnest on the waters,
By the moon's light I saw, whirl'd round and round,
A basket: soon I drew it to the bank,

And nestled curious there an infant lay.

Lady R. Was he alive?

Pris. He was.

Lady R. Inhuman that thou art!

100

How couldst thou kill what waves and tempest spared?

Pris. I am not so inhuman.

Lady R. Didst thou not?

Anna. My noble mistress, you are mov'd too much:
This man has not the aspect of stern murder;
Let him go on, and you, I hope, will hear
Good tidings of your kinsman's long-lost child.

Pris. The needy man who has known better days,
One whom distress has spited at the world,
Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds as make the prosperous men
Lift up their hands and wonder who could do them.
And such a man was I; a man declin'd,
Who saw no end of black adversity:
Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
Have touch'd that infant with a hand of harm.

Lady R. Ha! dost thou say so; then perhaps he lives.

Pris. Not many days ago he was alive.

Lady R. O God of Heav'n! did he then die so lately?

Pris. I did not say he died; I hope he lives.

Not many days ago these eyes beheld

121

Him, flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.

Lady R. Where is he now?

Pris. Alas! I know not where.

Lady R. Oh, fate! I fear thee still. Thou riddler,
speak

Direct and clear; else I will search thy soul.

Anna. "Permit me, ever honour'd ! Keen impatience,

"Though hard to be restrain'd, defeats itself."—
Pursue thy story with a faithful tongue,
To the last hour that thou didst keep the child.

Pris. Fear not my faith, though I must speak my shame ;

Within the cradle where the infant lay,
Was stow'd a mighty store of gold and jewels ;
Tempted by which, we did resolve to hide,
From all the world this wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed the noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travell'd to the north,
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought forth
Our secret wealth. But God's all-seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore. 140

For one by one all our own children died,
And he, the Stranger, sole remain'd the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I,
Who with a father's fondness lov'd the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret : but my anxious wife,
Foreboding evil, never would consent.
Meanwhile the stripling grew in years and beauty ;
And, as we oft observ'd, he bore himself,
Not as the offspring of our cottage blood ;
For nature will break out : mild with the mild,
But with the forward he was fierce as fire,
And night and day he talk'd of war and arms.
I set myself against his warlike bent ;
But all in vain ; for when a desperate band

Of robbers from the savage mountains came——

Lady R. Eternal Providence ! What is thy name ?

Pris. My name is Norval ; and my name he bears.

Lady R. 'Tis he ! 'tis he himself ! It is my son ! 160

Oh, sovereign mercy ! 'Twas my child I saw !

No wonder, Anna, that my bosom burn'd.

Anna. Just are your transports : “ ne'er was woman's
heart

“ Prov'd with such fierce extremes. High fated dame ! ”

But yet remember that you are beheld

By fervile eyes ; your gestures may be seen

Impassion'd, strange ; perhaps your words o'erheard.

Lady R. Well dost thou counsel, Anna : Heav'n
bestow

On me that wisdom which my state requires.

“ *Anna.* The moments of deliberation pass,

“ And soon you must resolve. This useful man.

“ Must be dismissed in safety, ere my lord

“ Shall with his brave deliverer return.”

Pris. If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
Have of your words and gestures rightly judg'd,

Thou art the daughter of my ancient master ;

The child I rescu'd from the flood is thine.

Lady R. With thee dissimulation now were vain,
I am indeed the daughter of Sir Malcolm ;

The child thou rescu'dst from the flood is mine 180

Pris. Blest be the hour that made me a poor man,
My poverty hath sav'd my master's house !

Lady R. Thy words surprize me : sure thou dost
not feign !

The tear stands in thine eye ; such love from thee

Sir Malcolm's house deserv'd not ; if aright

Thou told'st the story of thy own distress.

Prif. Sir Malcolm of our barons was the flower ;
The fastest friend, the best, the kindest master.

But ah ! he knew not of my sad estate.

After that battle, where his gallant son,
Your own brave brother, fell, the good old lord
Grew desperate and reckless of the world ;

And never, as he erst was wont, went forth

To overlook the conduct of his servants.

By them I was thrust out, and them I blame :

May Heav'n so judge me as I judge my master !

And God so love me as I love his race !

Lady R. His race shall yet reward thee. On thy
faith

Depends the fate of thy lov'd master's house.

Rememb'rest thou a little lonely hut,

200

That like a holy hermitage appears

Among the cliffs of Carron ?

Prif. I remember the cottage of the cliffs.

Lady R. 'Tis that I mean :

There dwells a man of venerable age,

Who in my father's service spent his youth :

Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain,

'Till I shall call upon thee to declare,

Before the king and nobles, what thou now

To me has told. No more but this, and thou

Shalt live in honour all thy future days ;

Thy son so long shall call thee father still,

And all the land shall bless the man who sav'd

The son of Douglas, and Sir Malcolm's heir.

Remember well my words ; if thou shouldst meet

Him whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so ;

And mention nothing of his nobler father.

Prif. Fear not that I shall mar so fair an harvest,
By putting in my sickle ere 'tis ripe.
Why did I leave my home and ancient dame? 220
To find the youth, to tell him all I knew,
And make him wear these jewels in his arms,
Which might, I thought, be challeng'd, and so bring
To light the secret of his noble birth,

[*Lady RANDOLPH goes towards the Servants.*

Lady R. This man is not th' assassin you suspected,
Though chance combin'd some likelihoods against
him.

He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.
'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
Since your mistaken zeal hath dragg'd him hither.

[*Exeunt Stranger and Servants.*

My faithful Anna! dost thou share my joy?
I know thou dost. Unparallel'd event!
Reaching from heav'n to earth, Jehovah's arm
Snatch'd from the waves, and brings to me my son!
Judge of the widow, and the orphan's father,
Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks
For such a gift! What does my Anna think
Of the young eaglet of a valiant nest?
How soon he gaz'd on bright and burning arms,
Spurn'd the low dunghill where his fate had thrown
him, 240

And tower'd up to the region of his fire!

Anna. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy!
Mysterious nature, with the unseen cord
Of pow'rful instinct, drew you to your own.

Lady R. The ready story of his birth believ'd
Supprest my fancy quite ; nor did he owe
To any likeness my so sudden favour :
But now I long to see his face again,
Examine every feature, and find out
The lineaments of Douglas, or my own.
But most of all I long to let him know
Who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,
And tell him all the story of his father.

Anna. With wary caution you must bear yourself
In public, lest your tenderness break forth,
And in observers stir conjectures strange.
“ For, if a cherub in the shape of woman
“ Should walk this world, yet defamation would,
“ Like a vile cur, bark at the angel's train.”— 260
To-day the baron started at your tears.

Lady R. He did so, Anna ! well thy mistress knows
If the least circumstance, mote of offence,
Should touch the baron's eye, his sight would be
With jealousy disorder'd. But the more
It does behove me instant to declare
The birth of Douglas, and assert his rights.
This night I purpose with my son to meet,
Reveal the secret, and consult with him :
For wise he is, or my fond judgment errs
As he does now, so look'd his noble father,
Array'd in Nature's ease : 'his mien, his speech,
Were sweetly simple, and full oft deceiv'd
Those trivial mortals who seem always wise.
But, when the matter match'd his mighty mind,
Up rose the hero ; on his piercing eye
Sat observation ; on each glance of thought

Decision follow'd, as the thunderbolt
Pursues the flash.

Anna. That demon haunts you still :
Behold Glenalvon !

280

Lady R. Now I shun him not.
This day I brav'd him in behalf of Norval :
Perhaps too far : at least my nicer fears
For Douglas thus interpret.

Enter GLENALVON.

Glen. Noble dame !
The hovering Dane at last his men hath landed :
No band of pirates ; but a mighty host,
That come to settle where their valour conquers :
To win a country, or to lose themselves.

Lady R. But whence comes this intelligence, Glenalvon ?

Glen. A nimble courier sent from yonder camp,
To hasten up the chieftains of the north,
Inform'd me as he pass'd, that the fierce Dane
Had on the eastern coast of Lothian landed,

“ Near to that place where the sea rock immense,

“ Amazing bas, looks o'er a fertile land.

“ *Lady R.* Then must this western army march to
join.

“ The warlike troops that guard Edena's tow'rs.

“ *Glen.* Beyond all question. If impairing time

“ Has not effac'd the image of a place, 300

“ Once perfect in my breast, there is a wild

“ Which lies to westward of that mighty rock,

“ And seems by nature formed for the camp.

“Of water-wafted armies, whose chief strength
“Lies in firm foot, unflank’d with warlike horse :
“If martial skill directs the Danish lords,
“There inaccessible their army lies
“To our swift-scow’ring horse, the bloody field
“Must man to man, and foot to foot be fought.”

Lady R. How many mothers shall bewail their sons !
How many widows weep their husbands slain !
Ye dames of Denmark, ev’n for you I feel.
Who, sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,
Long look for lords that never shall return.

Glen. Oft has th’ unconquer’d Caledonian sword
Widow’d the north. The children of the slain
Come, as I hope, to meet their father’s fate.
The monster war, with her infernal brood,
Loud-yelling fury and life-ending pain,
Are objects suited to Glenalvon’s soul.
Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death ;
Reproach more piercing than the pointed sword.

320

Lady R. I scorn thee not but when I ought to scorn ;
Nor e’er reproach, but when insulted virtue
Against audacious vice asserts herself.
I own thy worth, Glenalvon ; none more apt
Than I to praise thine eminence in arms,
And be the echo of thy martial fame.
No longer vainly feed a guilty passion :
Go and pursue a lawful mistress, Glory,
Upon the Danish crests redeem thy fault,
And let thy valour be the shield of Randolph.

Glen. One instant stay, and hear an alter’d man.
When beauty pleads for virtue, vice abash’d
Flies its own colours, and goes o’er to virtue.

I am your convert; time will shew how truly:
Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
That youth for whom your ardent zeal to-day,
Somewhat too haughtily defy'd your slave,
Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend, 340
And turn death from him, with a guardian arm,
"Sedate by use, my bosom maddens not
"At the tumultuous uproar of the field."

Lady R. Act thus, Glenalvon, and I am thy friend:
But that's thy least reward. Believe me, sir,
The truly generous is the truly wife;
And he who loves not others lives unblest.

[*Exit Lady RANDOLPH.*]

Glen. [solus.] Amen! and virtue is its own reward.
I think that I have hit the very tone,
In which she loves to speak. Honey'd assent,
How pleasant art thou to the taste of man,
And woman also! flattery direct
Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,
And opes the wicket of the human heart.
How far I have succeeded now, I know not.
Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
Is lull'd awhile; 'tis her alone I fear;
Whilst she and Randolph live, and live in faith
And amity, uncertain is my tenure. 360
"Fate o'er my head suspends disgrace and death,
"By that weak air, a peevish female's will.
"I am not idle; but the ebbs and flows
"Of fortune's tide cannot be calculated."
That slave of Norval's I have found most apt:
I shew'd him gold, and he has pawn'd his soul

To say and swear whatever I suggest.
Norval, I'm told, has that alluring look,
Twixt man and woman, which I have observ'd
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,
Who are, like lady Randolph, full of virtue.
In raising Randolph's jealousy, I may
But point him to the truth. He seldom errs,
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Flourish of Trumpets. Enter Lord RANDOLPH attended.

Lord Randolph.

SUMMON an hundred horse, by break of day,
To wait our pleasure at the castle gate.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady R. Alas, my Lord ! I've heard unwelcome
news ;

The Danes are landed.

Lord R. Ay, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian bent to take a spoil :

No sportive war, no tournament essay,
Of some young knight resolv'd to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms,
The Danes are landed : we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.

Lady R. Dreadful times !

Rord R. The fenceless villages are all forsaken ;
The trembling mothers, and their children lodg'd
In wall-girt towers and castles ; whilst the men
Retire indignant. Yet, like broken waves,
They but retire more awful to return.

Lady R. Immense, as fame reports, the Danish
host !

Lord R. Were it as numerous as loud fame reports,
An army knit like ours would pierce it through : 20
Brothers, that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions, fill our warlike files :
For his dear offspring, and the wife he loves,
The husband, and the fearless father arm.
In vulgar breasts heroic ardor burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.

Lady R. Men's minds are temper'd, like their
swords, for war ;

“ Lovers of danger, on destruction's brink
“ They joy to rear erect their daring forms.
“ Hence, early graves ; hence, the lone widow's life ;
“ And the sad mother's grief-embitter'd age.”
Where is our gallant guest ?

Lord R. Down in the vale
I left him, managing a fiery steed,

Whose stubbornness had foil'd the strength and skill
Of every rider. But behold he comes,
In earnest conversation with Glenalvon.

Enter NORVAL and GLENALVON.

Glenalvon ! with the lark arise ; go forth,
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale :
Private I travel to the royal camp : 40
Norval, thou goest with me. But say, young man !
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war,
And in such terms, as I o'erheard to-day ?
War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught amongst the shepherd swains.

Nor. Small is the skill my Lord delights to praise.
In him he favours. Hear from whence it came.
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by shepherds trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit liv'd ; a melancholy man,
Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains.
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself,
Did they report him ; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherd's alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touch'd
With reverence and with pity. Mild he spake,
And, entering on discourse, such stories told
As made me oft revisit his sad cell.
For he had been a soldier in his youth ; 60
And fought in famous battles, when the peers

Of Europe, by the bold Godfredo led,
Against th' usurping infidel display'd
The blessed cross, and won the Holy Land.
Pleas'd with my admiration, and the fire
His speech struck from me, the old man would shake
His years away, and act his young encounters :
Then, having shew'd his wounds, he'd sit him down,
And all the live-long day discourse of war.
To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf
He cut the figures of the marshal's hosts ;
Describ'd the motions, and explain'd the use
Of the deep column, and the lengthen'd line,
The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm.
For all that Saracen or Christian knew
Of war's vast art, was to this hermit known.

Lord R. Why did this soldier in a desert hide
Those qualities, that should have grac'd a camp ?

Nor. That too at last I learn'd. Unhappy man !
Returning homewards by Messina's port, 80
Loaded with wealth and honours bravely won.
A rude and boist'rous captain of the sea
Fasten'd a quarrel on him. Fierce they fought ;
The stranger fell, and with his dying breath
Declar'd his name and lineage. Mighty pow'r !
The soldier cried, my brother ! Oh my brother !

Lady R. His brother !

Nor. Yes ; of the same parents born ;
His only brother. They exchange'd forgiveness :
And happy in my mind was he that died ;
For many deaths has the survivor suffer'd.
In the wild desert on a rock he sits,
Or on some nameless stream's untrodden banks,

And ruminates all day his dreadful fate.
At times, alas ! not in his perfect mind,
Holds dialogues with his lov'd brother's ghost ;
And oft each night forsakes his sullen couch,
To make sad orisons for him he flew.

Lady R. To what mysterious woes are mortals born !
In this dire tragedy were there no more 100
Unhappy persons ? Did the parents live ?

Nor. No, they were dead ; kind Heav'n had clos'd
their eyes,

Before their son had shed his brother's blood.

Lord R. Hard is his fate ; for he was not to blame !
There is a destiny in this strange world,
Which oft decrees an undeserved doom.
Let schoolmen tell us why——From whence these
sounds ? [Trumpets at a distance.

Enter an Officer.

Off. My lord, the trumpets of the troops of Lorn :
The valiant leader hails the noble Randolph.

Lord R. Mine ancient guest ! Does he the warriors
lead ?

Has Denmark rous'd the brave old knight to arms ?

Off. No ; worn with warfare, he resigns the sword.
His eldest hope, the valiant John of Lorn,
Now leads his kindred bands.

Lord R. Glenalvon, go.
With hospitality's most strong request
Entreat the chief. [Exit Glenalvon.

Off. My lord, requests are vain.
He urges on, impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach. 120

Lord R. May victory sit on the warrior's plume!
Bravest of men! his flocks and herds are safe;
Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secur'd:
Yet foremost he into the plain descends,
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.
Such were the heroes of the ancient world;
Contemners they of indolence and gain;
But still, for love of glory and of arms,
Prone to encounter peril, and to lift,
Against each strong antagonist, the spear.
I'll go and press the hero to my breast.

[*Exit with the Officer.*]

Lady R. The soldier's loftiness, the pride and pomp
Investing awful war, Norval, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.

Nor. Ah! should they not?
Bless'd be the hour I left my father's house!
I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.
Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand; 140
And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.

Lady R. There is a generous spirit in thy breast,
That could have well sustain'd a prouder fortune.
This way with me; under yon spreading beech,
Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,
I will amaze thee with a wond'rous tale.

Nor. Let there be danger, Lady, with the secret,
That I may hug it to my grateful heart,
And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life:
These are the sole possessions of poor Norval.

Lady R. Know'st thou these gems,?

Nor. Durst I believe mine eyes,
I'd say I knew them, and they were my father's.

Lady R. Thy father's, say'st thou? Ah, they were
thy father's!

Nor. I saw them once, and curiously enquir'd
Of both my parents, whence such splendor came?
But I was check'd, and more could never learn.

Lady R. Then learn of me, thou art not Norval's
son.

Nor. Not Norval's son!

Lady R. Nor of a shepherd sprung. 160

Nor. Lady, who am I then?

Lady R. Noble thou art;
For noble was thy fire.

Nor. I will believe——

Oh, tell me farther! Say, who was my father?

Lady R. Douglas!

Nor. Lord Douglas, whom to-day I saw?

Lady R. His younger brother.

Nor. And in yonder camp?

Lady R. Alas!

Nor. You make me tremble—Sighs and tears &
Lives my brave father?

Lady R. Ah! too brave, indeed!
He fell in battle ere thyself was born.

Nor. Ah me, unhappy ! Ere I saw the light !
But does my mother live ? I may conclude,
From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.

Lady R. She lives ; but wastes her life in constant
woe,

Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.

Nor. You that are skill'd so well in the sad story
Of my unhappy parents, and with tears 181

Bewail their destiny, now have compassion

Upon the offspring of the friends you lov'd.

Oh, tell me who and where my mother is !

Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends

Beneath the weight of other ills than grief ;

And, desolate, implores of Heaven the aid

Her son should give. It is, it must be so——

Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.

Oh, tell me her condition ! Can the sword——

Who shall resist me in a parent's cause ?

Lady R. Thy virtue ends her woes—My son ! my
son !

I am thy mother, and the wife of Douglas !

[*Falls upon his neck.*]

Nor. Oh, heaven and earth ? how wond'rous is my
fate !

Art thou my mother ? Ever let me kneel !

Lady R. Image of Douglas ! fruit of fatal love !
All that I owe thy fire, I pay to thee.

Nor. Respect and admiration still possess me.

Checking the love and fondness of a son :

Yet I was filial to my humble parents.

200

But did my fire surpass the rest of men,

As thou excellest of all womankind ?

Lady R. Arise, my son. In me thou dost behold
The poor remains of beauty once admir'd.
The autumn of my days is come already :
For sorrow made my summer haste away.
Yet in my prime I equall'd not thy father :
His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes
Like, the dove's ; and, as he pleas'd, he won
All hearts with softness, or with spirit aw'd.

Nor. How did he fall? Sure 'twas a bloody field
When Douglas died. Oh, I have much to ask !

Lady R. Hereafter thou shalt hear the lengthened tale
Of all thy father's and my mother's woes.
At present this—Thou art the rightful heir
Of yonder castle, and the wide domains
Which now lord Randolph, as my husband, holds.
But thou shalt not be wrong'd ; I have the power
To right thee still. Before the King I'll kneel,
And call lord Douglas to protect his blood. 220

Nor. The blood of Douglas will protect itself.

Lady R. But we shall need both friends and favour,
boy,

To wrest thy lands and lordship from the gripe
Of Randolph and his kinsman. Yet I think
My tale would move each gentle heart to pity,
My life incline the virtuous to believe.

Nor. To be the son of Douglas is to me
Inheritance enough. Declare my birth,
And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.

Lady R. Thou dost not know what perils and
injustice
Await the poor man's valour. Oh, my son !

The noblest blood of all the land's abash'd,
Having no lacquey but pale poverty.
Too long hast thou been thus attended, Douglas,
Too long hast thou been deem'd a peasant's child.
The wanton heir of some inglorious chief
Perhaps has scorn'd thee in the youthful sports,
Whilst thy indignant spirit swell'd in vain.
Such contumely thou no more shalt bear :
But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs 240
Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs
That we should part before yon chiefs return.
Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand
Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,
Anxious to see thee, dictated before
This casual opportunity arose
Of private conference. Its purport mark ;
For as I there appoint, we meet again.
Leave me, my son ; and frame thy manners still
To Norval's, not to noble Douglas' state.

Nor. I will remember. Where is Norval now ?
That good old man.

Lady R. At hand conceal'd he lies,
An useful witness. But beware, my son,
Of yon Glenalvon ; in his guilty breast
Resides a villain's shrewdness, ever prone
To false conjecture. He hath griev'd my heart.

Nor. Has he, indeed ? Then let yon false Glenal-
von

Beware of me.

[*Exit.*

Lady R. There burst the smother'd flame. 260
Oh, thou all-righteous and eternal King !

Who Father of the fatherless are call'd,
 Protect my son ! Thy inspiration, Lord !
 Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,
 Which in the breasts of his forefathers burn'd :
 Set him on high, like them, that he may shine
 The star and glory of his native land !
 Then let the minister of death descend,
 And bear my willing spirit to its place.
 Yonder they come. How do bad women find
 Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt,
 When I, by reason and by justice urg'd,
 Full hardly can dissemble with these men
 In nature's pious cause ?

Enter Lord RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord R. Yon gallant chief,
 Of arms enamour'd, all repose disclaims.

Lady R. Be not, my lord, by his example sway'd.
 Arrange the business of to-morrow now,
 And when you enter, speak of war no more. [*Exit.*]

Lord R. 'Tis so, by heav'n ! her mien, her voice,
 her eye, 280

And her impatience to be gone, confirm it.

Glen. He parted from her now. Behind the mount,
 Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.

Lord R. For sad sequester'd virtue she's renown'd.

Glen. Most true, my Lord.

Lord R. Yet this distinguish'd dame
 Invites a youth, th' acquaintance of a day,

Alone to meet her at the midnight hour.
This assignation [*Shews a letter.*] the assassin freed,
Her manifest affection for the youth,
Might breed suspicion in a husband's brain,
Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded :
Much more in mine. Matilda never lov'd me.
Let no man, after me, a woman wed
Whose heart he knows he has not ; though she brings
A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry.
For let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,
Cold and contemplative—he cannot trust her :
She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him ;
The worst of sorrows, and the worst of shames ! 300

Glen. Yield not, my lord, to such afflicting thoughts ;
But let the spirit of an husband sleep,
Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.
This billet must to blooming Norval go :
At the next turn awaits my trusty spy ;
I'll give it him refitted for his master.
In the close thicket take your secret stand ;
The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may judge
Of their behaviour.

Lord R. Thou dost counsel well.

Glen. Permit me now to make one slight essay.
Of all the trophies which vain mortals boast,
By wit, by valour, or by wisdom won,
The first and fairest in a young man's eye,
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind,
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves,
Air-born, exalted above vulgar men.

Lord R. And what avails this maxim ?

Glen. Much, my lord.

320

Withdraw a little ; I'll accost young Norval,
And with ironical derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble Norval by thy favour rais'd,
Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonish'd from me :
But if he be the favourite of the fair,
Lov'd by the first of Caledonia's dames,
He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
Upon the hunter's spear.

Lord R. 'Tis shrewdly thought.

Glen. When we grow loud, draw near. But let
my lord

His rising wrath restrain.

[*Exit Randolph.*

'Tis strange, by Heav'n !

That she should run full tilt her fond career
To one so little known. She too that seem'd
Pure as the winter stream, when ice imbofs'd,
Whitens its course. Even I did think her chaste,
Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex !
Whose deeds lascivious pass Glenalvon's thoughts !

Enter NORVAL.

His port I love ; he's in a proper mood
To chide the thunder, if at him it roar'd.
Has Norval seen the troops ?

340

[*Aside.*

Nor. The setting sun

With yellow radiance lighten'd all the vale ;
And as the warriors mov'd each polish'd helm,
Corset, or spear, glanc'd back his gilded beams.
The hill they climb'd, and halting at its top,
Of more than mortal size, tow'ring, they seem'd

An host angelic, clad in burning arms.

Glen. Thou talk'st it well ; no leader of our host
In sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

Nor. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely ; since no part is mine
Of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

Glen. You wrong yourself, brave Sir ; your martial
 deeds

Have rank'd you with the great. But mark me,
 Norval ;

Lord Randolph's favour now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service. 360

Let me who know these soldiers, counsel you.
Give them all honour : seem not to command ;
Else they will scarcely brook your late sprung power,
Which nor alliance props, nor birth adorns.

Nor. Sir, I have been accustomed all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth :
And tho' I have been told that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their scorn,
Yet in such language I am little skill'd.
Therefore I thank Glenalvon for his counsel,
Although it sounded harshly. Why remind
Me of my birth obscure ? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms ?

Glen. I did not mean
To gall your pride, which now I see is great.

Nor. My pride !

Glen. Suppress it, as you wish to prosper.
Your pride's excessive. Yet, for Randolph's sake,

I will not leave you to its rash direction.
 If thus you swell, and frown at high-born men, 380
 Will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?

Nor. A shepherd's scorn!

Glen. Yes; if you presume
 To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,
 What will become of you?

Nor. If this were told!——

[*Aside.*

Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?

Glen. Ha! dost thou threaten me?

Nor. Didst thou not hear?

Glen. Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe
 Had not been question'd thus. But such as thee——

Nor. Whom dost thou think me?

Glen. Norval.

Nor. So I am——

And who is Norval in Glenalvon's eyes?

Glen. A peasant's son, a wandering beggar-boy;
 At best no more, even if he speaks the truth.

Nor. False as thou art, dost thou suspect my truth?

Glen. Thy truth! thou'rt all a lie: and false as hell
 Is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.

Nor. If I were chain'd, unarm'd, and bed-rid old,
 Perhaps I should revile; but as I am, 402

I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval
 Is of a race who strive not but with deeds.

Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,
 And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
 I'd tell thee—what thou art. I know thee well.

Glen. Dost thou not know Glenalvon, born to com-
 mand

Ten thousand slaves like thee——

Nor. Villain, no more !

Draw and defend thy life. I did design

To have defy'd thee in another cause :

But Heav'n accelerates its vengeance on thee.

Now for my own and lady Randolph's wrongs.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Hold, I command you both. The man
that stirs

Makes me his foe.

Nor. Another voice than thine

That threat had vainly founded, noble Randolph.

Glen. Hear him, my Lord ; he's wond'rous con-
descending !

Mark the humility of shepherd Norval ! 420

Nor. Now you may scoff in safety.

[Sheaths his sword.]

Lord R. Speak not thus,

Taunting each other ; but unfold to me

The cause of quarrel, then I judge betwixt you.

Nor. Nay, my good Lord, tho' I revere you much,

My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.

I blush to speak ; I will not, cannot speak

Th' opprobrious words that I from him have borne.

To the liege-lord of my dear native land

I owe a subject's homage : but ev'n him

And his high arbitration I'd reject.

Within my bosom reigns another lord ;

Honour, sole judge and umpire of itself.

If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph,

Revoke your favours, and let Norval go
Hence as he came, alone, but not dishonour'd.

Lord R. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial voice :
The ancient foe of Caledonia's land
Now waves his banners o'er her frightened fields.
Suspend your purpose till your country's arms 440
Repel the bold invader: then decide
The private quarrel.

Glen. I agree to this.

Nor. And I.

Enter Servant.

Ser. The banquet waits.

Lord R. We come.

[*Exit with Servant.*]

Glen. Norval,

Let not our variance mar the social hour,
Nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph.
Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate,
Shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy brow ;
Nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.

Nor. Think not so lightly, Sir, of my resentment.
When we contend again, our strife is mortal. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Douglas.

THIS is the place, the centre of the grove ;
Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
How sweet and solemn is this midnight scene !
The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way
Thro' skies where I could count each little star.
The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves ! 460
The river, rushing o'er its pebbled bed,
Imposes silence with a stillly sound.
In such a place as this, at such an hour,
If ancestry can be in ought believed,
Descending spirits have convers'd with man,
And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter Old NORVAL.

Old Nor. 'Tis he. But what if he should chide
me hence ?
His just reproach I fear.

[*Douglas turns aside and sees him.*]

Forgive, forgive,
Canst thou forgive the man, the selfish man,
Who bred Sir Malcolm's heir, a shepherd's son ?

Doug. Kneel not to me ; thou art my father still :
Thy wish'd-for presence now completes my joy.
Welcome to me ; my fortunes thou shalt share,
And ever honour'd with thy Douglas live.

Old Nor. And dost thou call me father ; Oh, my son !
I think that I could die, to make amends
For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime
Which in the wilderness so long conceal'd
The blossom of thy youth. 480

Doug. Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blow'd.
Amongst the shepherds, in the humble cot,
I learn'd some lessons, which I'll not forget
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
The poor man's friend ; and when my vassals bow,
Norval shall smoothe the crested pride of Douglas.

Nor. Let me but live to see thine exaltation !
Yet grievous are my fears. Oh, leave this place,
And those unfriendly towers !

Doug. Why should I leave them ?

Nor. Lord Randolph and his kinsman seek your
life.

Doug. How know'st thou that ?

Old Nor. I will inform you how :

When evening came, I left the secret place
Appointed for me by your mother's care,
And fondly trod in each accustom'd path
That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I rang'd,
I was alarm'd with unexpected sounds 500
Of earnest voices. On the persons came.
Unseen I lurk'd, and overheard them name

Each other as they talk'd, Lord Randolph this,
And that Glenalvon. Still of you they spoke,
And of the lady; threat'ning was their speech,
Tho' but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discov'ry;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Doug. Revenge! for what?

Old Nor. For being what you are,
Sir Malcolm's heir: how else have you offended?
When they were gone, I hied me to my cottage,
And there sat musing how I best might find
Means to inform you of their wicked purpose,
But I could think of none. At last, perplex'd
I issued forth, encompassing the tower
With many a weary step and wishful look.
Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
The caution which I give.

520

Doug. I scorn it not.

My mother warn'd me of Glenalvon's baseness;
But I will not suspect the noble Randolph.
In our encounter with the vile assassins,
I mark'd his brave demeanour; him I'll trust.

Old Nor. I fear you will, too far.

Doug. Here in this place

I wait my mother's coming: she shall know
What thou hast told: Her counsel I will follow.
And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
You must depart: your presence may prevent
Our interview.

Old Nor. My blessing rest upon thee!

Oh, may Heav'n's hand, which sav'd thee from the
wave,

And from the sword of foes, be near thee still ;
Turning mischance, if ought hangs o'er thy head,
All upon mine. [Exit.

Doug. He loves me like a parent ;
And must not, shall not, lose the son he loves,
Altho' his son has found a nobler father. 540
Eventful day ! how hast thou chang'd my state !
Once on the cold and winter-shaded side
Of a bleak hill mischance had rooted me,
Never to thrive, child of another soil ;
Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers,
Ye glorious stars ! high Heaven's resplendent host !
To whom I oft have of my lot complain'd,
Hear and record my soul's unalter'd wish !
Dead or alive, let me but be renown'd !
May Heav'n inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
To give a bold defiance to our host !
Before he speaks it out I will accept ;
Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady R. My son, I heard a voice——

Doug. The voice was mine.

Lady R. Didst thou complain aloud to Nature's
ear,

That thus in dusky shades, at midnight hours,

By stealth the mother and the son should meet ?

[*Embracing him.*]

Doug. No; on this happy day, this better birth-day,

My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy. 562

Lady R. Sad fear and melancholy still divide
The empire of my breast with hope and joy.

Now hear what I advise——

Doug. First, let me tell

What may the tenor of your counsel change.

Lady R. My heart forebodes some evil.

Doug. 'Tis not good——

At eve, unseen by Randolph and Glenalvon,
The good old Norval in the grove o'erheard
Their conversation ; oft they mention'd me
With dreadful threat'nings ; you they sometimes
nam'd.

'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discov'ry ;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Lady R. Defend us, gracious God ! we are be-
tray'd :

They have found out the secret of thy birth :
It must be so. That is the great discovery.
Sir Malcolm's heir is come to claim his own,
And they will be reveng'd. Perhaps even now,
Arm'd and prepar'd for murder, they but wait 580
A darker and more silent hour, to break
Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.
This moment, this, Heav'n hath ordain'd to save
thee !

Fly to the camp, my son !

Doug. And leave you here?

No: to the castle let us go together.

Call up the ancient servants of your house,

Who in their youth did eat your father's bread.

Then tell them loudly that I am your son.

If in the breasts of men one spark remains

Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,

Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few

To drive those spoilers from my father's house.

Lady R. Oh, Nature, Nature! what can check
thy force?

Thou genuine offspring of the daring Douglas!

But rush not on destruction: save thyself,

And I am safe. T'is me they mean no harm.

Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.

That winding path conducts thee to the river.

Cross where thou seest a broad and beaten way, 600

Which running eastward leads thee to the camp.

Instant demand admittance to lord Douglas;

Shew him these jewels which his brother wore.

Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the truth,

Which I by a certain proof will soon confirm.

Doug. I yield me, and obey: but yet my heart

Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay

And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read

Of wondrous deeds by one bold arm achiev'd.

Our foes are two; no more: let me go forth,

And see if any shield can guard Glenalvon.

Lady R. If thou regard'st thy mother, or rever'st

Thy father's memory, think of this no more.

One thing I have to say before we part:

Long wert thou lost ; and thou art found, my child,
In a most fearful season. War and battle
I have great cause to dread. Too well I see
Which way the current of thy temper sets :
To-day I've found thee. Oh ! my long-lost hope !
If thou to giddy valour giv'st the reign, 620
To-morrow I may lose my son for ever.
The love of thee before thou saw'st the light,
Sustain'd my life when thy brave father fell.
If thou shalt fall, I have nor love nor hope
In this waste world ! My son, remember me !

Doug. What shall I say ? How can I give you
comfort ?

The God of battles of my life dispose
As may be best for you ! for whose dear sake
I will not bear myself as I resolv'd.
But yet consider, as no vulgar name,
That which I boast, sounds amongst martial men,
How will inglorious caution suit my claim ?
The post of fate unshrinking I maintain.
My country's foes must witness who I am.
On the invaders' heads I'll prove my birth,
'Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.
If in this strife I fall, blame not your son,
Who, if he lives not honour'd, must not live.

Lady R. I will not utter what my bosom feels.
Too well I love that valour which I warn. 640
Farewell, my son ! my counsels are but vain,

[*Embracing.*

And as high Heav'n hath will'd it, all must be.

[*Separate.*

Gaze not on me, thou wilt mistake the path;
I'll point it out again. [*Just as they are separating,*

*Enter from the wood Lord RANDOLPH and
GLENALVON.*

Lord R. Not in her presence.

Now——

Glen. I'm prepar'd.

Lord R. No : I command thee stay.

I go alone : It never shall be said

That I took odds to combat mortal man.

The noblest vengeance is the most compleat. [*Exit.*

[*GLENALVON makes some steps to the same side of
the stage, listens and speaks.*

Glen. Demons of death come settle on my sword,
And to a double slaughter guide it home !

The lover and the husband both must die.

Lord R. [*Behind the scenes.*] Draw, villain ! draw !

Doug. [*Without.*] Assail me not, lord Randolph ;
Not as thou lov'st thyself. [*Clashing of swords.*

Glen. [*Running out.*] Now is the time.

*Enter Lady RANDOLPH, at the opposite side of the stage,
faint and breathless.*

Lady R. Lord Randolph, hear me ; all shall be
thine own !

But spare ! Oh, spare my son !

Enter DOUGLAS, with a sword in each hand.

Doug. My mother's voice !

I can protect thee still.

Lady R. He lives, he lives ;

For this, for this to Heav'n eternal praise !

But sure I saw thee fall.

Doug. It was Glenalvon,

Just as my arm had master'd Randolph's sword,

The villain came behind me ; but I slew him.

Lady R. Behind thee ! ah ! thou'rt wounded !

Oh, my child,

How pale thou look'st ! And shall I lose thee now ?

Doug. Do not despair : I feel a little faintness ;

I hope it will not last. *[Leans upon his sword.]*

Lady R. There is no hope !

And we must part ! The hand of death is on thee !

Oh ! my beloved child ! O Douglas, Douglas !

[DOUGLAS growing more and more faint.]

Doug. Too soon we part : I have not long been

Douglas ;

O destiny ! hardly thou deal'st with me ;

Clouded and hid, a stranger to myself,

In low and poor obscurity I've liv'd.

Lady R. Has Heav'n preserv'd thee for an end
like this ? 760

Doug. Oh ! had I fall'n as my brave fathers fell,

Turning with fatal arm the tide of battle !

Like them I should have smil'd and welcom'd death :

But thus to perish by a villain's hand !

Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,
Which never mortal was so fond to run.

Lady R. Hear, Justice, hear ! stretch thy avenging
arm. [DOUGLAS falls.

Doug. Unknown I die ; no tongue shall speak of
me.

Some noble spirits, judging by themselves
May yet conjecture what I might have prov'd,
And think life only wanting to my fame :
But who shall comfort thee ?

Lady R. Despair, despair !

Doug. Oh, had it pleas'd high Heav'n to let me
live

A little while ! — my eyes that gaze on thee
Grow dim apace ! my mother — O ! my mother !

[Dies.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lord R. Thy words, thy words of truth, have
pierc'd my heart ;
I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.
Oh ! if my brave deliverer survives
The traitor's sword — 700

Anna. Alas ! look there, my lord.

Lord R. The mother and her son ! How curst I am !
Was I the cause ? No : I was not the cause.
Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul
To frantic jealousy.

Anna. My lady lives :
The agony of grief hath but suppress'd
A while her powers.

Lord R. But my deliverer's dead ;

“ The world did once esteem lord Randolph well,
“ Sincere of heart, for spotless honour fam’d :
“ And, in my early days, glory I gain’d
“ Beneath the holy banner of the cross.
“ Now past the noon of life, shame comes upon me ;
“ Reproach, and infamy, and public hate,
“ Are near at hand : for all mankind will think
“ That Randolph basely stabb’d Sir Malcolm’s heir.”

Lady R. [*Recovering.*] Where am I now ? Still in
this wretched world !

Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.

“ My youth was worn in anguish : but youth’s
“ strength,

“ With hope’s assistance, bore the brunt of sorrow ;
“ And train’d me on to be the object now,
“ On which Omnipotence displays itself,
“ Making a spectacle, a tale of me,
“ To awe it’s vassal, man.”

Lord R. Oh, misery !

Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim

My innocence.

Lady R. Thy innocence !

730

Lady R. My guilt

Is innocence compar’d with what thou think’st it.

Lady R. Of thee I think not : what have I to do
With thee, or any thing ? My son ! my son !
My beautiful ! my brave ! how proud was I
Of thee and of thy valour ! my fond heart
O’erflow’d this day with transport, when I thought
Of growing old amidst a race of thine,
Who might make up to me their father’s childhood,

And bear my brother's and my husband's name :
Now all my hopes are dead ! A little while
Was I a wife ! a mother not so long !
What am I now ?—I know.—But I shall be
That only whilst I please ; for such a son
And such a husband drive me to my fate. [*Runs out.*]

Lord R. Follow her, Anna : I myself would follow,

But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

[*Exit ANNA.*]

Enter Old NORVAL.

Old Nor. I heard the voice of woe : Heav'n guard
my child ?

Lord R. Already is the idle gaping crowd,
The spiteful vulgar, come to gaze on Randolph.
Begone.

750

Old Nor. I fear thee not. I will not go.
Here I'll remain. I'm an accomplice, lord,
With thee in murder. Yes, my sins did help
To crush down to the ground this lovely plant.
Oh, noblest youth that ever yet was born !
Sweetest and best, gentlest and bravest spirit,
That ever blest the world ! Wretch that I am,
Who saw that noble spirit swell and rise
Above the narrow limits that confin'd it,
Yet never was by all thy virtues won
To do thee justice, and reveal the secret,
Which, timely known, had rais'd thee far above
The villain's snare. Oh ! I am punish'd now !

These are the hairs that should have strew'd the
ground,

And not the locks of Douglas.

*[Tears his hair, and throws himself upon the body of
Douglas.]*

Lord R. I know thee now : “ thy boldness I for-
give :

“ My crest is fallen.” For thee I will appoint

A place of rest, if grief will let thee rest.

I will reward, altho' I cannot punish.

Curs'd, curs'd Glenalvon, he escap'd too well, 770

Tho' slain and baffled by the hand he hated.

Foaming with rage and fury to the last,

Curfing his conqueror, the felon died.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. My lord ! My lord !

Lord R. Speak : I can hear of horror.

Anna. Horror, indeed !

Lord R. Matilda ?

Anna. Is no more.

She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill,

Nor halted till the precipice she gain'd, 780

Beneath whose low'ring top the river falls

Ingulph'd in rifted rocks : thither she came,

As fearless as the eagle lights upon it,

And headlong down —

Lord R. 'Twas I alas ! 'twas I

That fill'd her breast with fury ; drove her down

The precipice of death ! Wretch that I am !

Anna. Oh, had you seen her last despairing look !
Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
Down on the deep : then lifting up her head
And her white hands to Heaven, seeming to say,
Why am I forc'd to this ? she plung'd herself
Into the empty air.

Lord R. I will not vent,
In vain complaints, the passion of my soul.
Peace in this world I never can enjoy.
These wounds the gratitude of Randolph gave ;
They speak aloud, and with the voice of fate
Denounce my doom. I am resolv'd. I'll go
Straight to the battle, where the man that makes 800
Me turn aside must threaten worse than death.
Thou, faithful to thy mistress, take this ring,
Full warrant of my power. Let every rite
With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait :
For Randolph hopes he never shall return. [*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE.

*An Epilogue I ask'd ; but not one word
Our bard will write. He vows 'tis most absurd
With comic wit to contradict the strain
Of tragedy and make your sorrows vain.
Sadly he says, that pity is the best,
And noblest passion of the human breast :
For when its sacred streams the heart o'er-flow,
In gushes pleasure with the tide of woe ;
And when its waves retire, like those of Nile,
They leave behind him such a golden soil,
That there the virtues without culture grow,
There the sweet blossoms of affection blow.
These were his words ; void of delusive art,
I felt them : for he spoke them from his heart.
Nor will I now attempt, with witty folly,
To chase away celestial melancholy.*

APPENDIX

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the State, and who have taken the oaths of office and qualification, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the laws of the State.

GOVERNOR: [Name]
VICE-GOVERNOR: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE TREASURY: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE AGRICULTURE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE EDUCATION: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE PUBLIC WORKS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE MILITARY AFFAIRS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE NAVAL AFFAIRS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE MARINE AFFAIRS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE AIR AFFAIRS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE RAILROADS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE CANALS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE PORTS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE CUSTOMS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE REVENUE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE EXCISE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE SALT: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE SUGAR: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE RICE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE COTTON: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE WOOL: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE LANA: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE SILK: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE FUR: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE BEE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE HONEY: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE BUTTER: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE CHEESE: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE EGGS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE POULTRY: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE FISH: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE GAME: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE BEASTS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE BIRDS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE INSECTS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE PLANTS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE MINERALS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE METALS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE STONES: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE WOODS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE WATERS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE AIR: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE EARTH: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE HEAVENS: [Name]
COMMISSIONERS OF THE UNIVERSE: [Name]



Act V.

JANE SHORE.



W. J. del.

Houston sculp.

M^{rs} SIDDONS as JANE SHORE.

*But now tis otherwise and those who blest me?
now curse me to my face?*

Dublin, Published by William Jones, N^o 66 Dame Street.



JANE SHORE.

*Thou art that foul fair that cursed she
 Her sex may learn a madding
 Act 3.*



JANE SHORE.

▲
TRAGEDY.

BY N. ROWE, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,
By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL,
FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCII.



T. O.

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF
QUEENSBERRY AND DOVER,
MARQUIS OF BEVERLEY, &c.

MY LORD,

I HAVE long lain under the greatest obligation to your Grace's family, and nothing has been more in my wishes, than that I might be able to discharge some part, at least, of so large a debt. But your noble birth and fortune, the power, number, and goodness of those friends you have already, have placed you in such an independency on the rest of the world, that the services I am able to render to your Grace, can never be advantageous, I am sure not necessary, to you in any part of your life. However, the next piece of gratitude, and the only one I am capable of, is the acknowledgment of what I owe: and as this is the most public, and indeed the only way I have of doing it, your Grace will pardon me, if I take this opportunity, to let the world know the duty and honour I had for your illustrious father. It is, I must confess, a very tender point to touch upon; and at the first sight, may seem an ill-chosen compliment, to renew the memory of such a loss, especially to a disposition so sweet and gentle, and to a heart so sensible of

H

filial piety, as your Grace's has been, even from your earliest childhood. But perhaps, this is one of those griefs, by which the heart may be made better; and if the remembrance of his death bring heaviness along with it, the honour that is paid to his memory by all good men, shall wipe away those tears, and the example of his life, set before your eyes, shall be of the greatest advantage to your Grace, in the conduct and future disposition of your own.

In a character so amiable, as that of the Duke of Queensberry was, there can be no part so proper to begin with, as that which was in him, and is in all good men, the foundation of all other virtues, either religious or civil, I mean good-nature: Good-nature, which is friendship between man and man, good-breeding in courts, charity in religion, and the true spring of all beneficence in general. This was a quality he possessed in as great a measure as any gentleman I ever had the honour to know. It was this natural sweetness of temper, which made him the best man in the world to live with, in any kind of relation. It was this made him a good master to his servants, a good friend to his friends, and the tenderest father to his children. For the last, I can have no better voucher than your Grace; and for the rest, I may appeal to all that have had the honour to know him. There was a spirit and pleasure in his conversation, which always enlivened the company he was in; which, together with a certain easiness and frankness in his disposition, that did not at all derogate from the

dignity of his birth and character, rendered him infinitely agreeable. And as no man had a more delicate taste of natural wit, his conversation always abounded in good-humour.

For those parts of his character which related to the public, as he was a nobleman of the first rank, and a minister of state, they will be best known by the great employments he passed through; all which he discharged worthily as to himself, justly to the princes who employed him, and advantageously for his country. There is no occasion to enumerate his several employments, as secretary of state, for Scotland in particular, for Britain in general, or lord high commissioner of Scotland; which last office he bore more than once; but at no time more honourably, and (as I hope) more happily, both for the present age and for posterity, than when he laid the foundation for the British Union. The constancy and address which he manifested on that occasion, are still fresh in every body's memory; and perhaps when our children shall reap those benefits from that work, which some people do not foresee and hope for now, they may remember the Duke of Queensberry with that gratitude, which such a piece of service done to his country deserves.

He shew'd, upon all occasions, a strict and immediate attachment to the crown, in the legal service of which, no man could exert himself more dutifully, nor more strenuously; and at the same time, no man gave more

bold and more generous evidences of the love he bore to his country. Of the latter, there can be no better proof, than the share he had in the late happy Revolution ; nor of the former, than that dutiful respect, and unshaken fidelity, which he preserved for her present majesty, even to his last moments.

With so many good and great qualities, it is not at all strange that he possessed so large a share, as he was known to have, in the esteem of the queen, and her immediate predecessor ; nor that those great princes should repose the highest confidence in him : and at the same time, what a pattern has he left behind him for the nobility in general, and for your Grace in particular, to copy after !

Your Grace will forgive me, if my zeal for your welfare and honour (which nobody has more at heart than myself) shall press you with some more than ordinary warmth to the imitation of your noble father's virtues. You have, my lord, many great advantages, which may encourage you to go on in pursuit of this reputation : it has pleased God to give you naturally that sweetness of temper, which, as I have before hinted, is the foundation of all good inclinations. You have the honour to be born, not only of the greatest, but of the best parents ; of a gentleman generally beloved, and generally lamented ; and of a lady adorned with all virtues that enter into the character of a good wife, an admirable friend, and a most indulgent mother. The

natural advantages of your mind, have been cultivated by the most proper arts and manners of education. You have the care of many noble friends, and especially of an excellent uncle, to watch over you in the tenderness of your youth. You set out amongst the first of mankind, and I doubt not but your virtues will be equal to the dignity of your rank.

That I may live to see your Grace eminent for the love of your country, for your service and duty to your prince, and, in convenient time, adorned with all the honours that have ever been conferred upon your noble family: that you may be distinguished to posterity, as the bravest, greatest, and best man of the age you live in, is the hearty wish and prayer of

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, and

most faithful, humble servant,

N. ROWE.

JANE SHORE.

THIS play is attractive upon various accounts—It presents a familiar picture of well-known events, treated with much delicacy and skill—and its moral use is also great, as exemplifying upon the fickleness of high fortune, and the gloomy proof, that the friendship which courts the summer of prosperity is blighted by the winter of adversity.

But ROWE never suffered a stronger delusion of the mind than that, which whispered to him, that his Play bore a resemblance to the weightier productions of SHAKSPEARE. ROWE is not without his strength of sentiment—he can express an axiom of policy or morals nervously, and with considerable splendour; but the reflex picture of the mind, the labouring progression of thought, or the retrospective anguish of guilty compunction, are all beyond his grasp.—He is little accustomed to the inward search after natural feeling, and the self-imposed state of artificial being—He studied Books rather than MAN in *himself*.

Yet there are tender and soothing passages in this Play—there is a well apposed succession of striking

events, that interest as they are embellished facts, and have a merit that would make them interest even if they were fictitious.

PROLOGUE.

*TO-night, if you have brought your good old taste,
We'll treat you with a downright English feast :
A tale, which told long since in homely wise,
Hath never fail'd of melting gentle eyes.
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame,
Because recording ballads chaunt her name ;
Those venerable ancient song-enditers
Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers :
They caterwaul'd in no romantic ditty,
Sighing for Phillis's, or Chloe's pity.
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain.
And sung her by her christian name—'twas Jane.
Our numbers may be more refin'd than those,
But what we've gain'd in verse, we've lost in prose.
Their words no shuffling, double meaning knew,
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught ;
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Our humble author does his steps pursue,
He owns he had the mighty bard in view ;
And in these scenes has made it more his care,
To rouse the passions, than to charm the ear.*

*Yet for those gentle beaux, who love the chime,
The ends of acts still jingle into rhyme.
The ladies, too, he hopes, will not complain.
Here are some subjects for a softer strain,
A nymph forsaken, and a perjur'd swain.
What most he fears, is, lest the dames should frown,
The dames of wit and pleasure about town,
To see our picture drawn unlike their own.
But lest that error should provoke to fury
The hospitable hundreds of old Drury,
He bid me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,
She dole'd about the charitable pence,
Built hospitals, turn'd saint, and dy'd long since.
For her example, whatso'er we make it,
They have their choice to let alone or take it.
Tho' few, as I conceive, will think it meet,
To weep so sorely, for a sin so sweet :
Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,
To rise in tragedy two ages hence.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Duke of GLOSTER,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
Lord HASTINGS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
CATESBY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Phillimore.
Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Benson.
BELMOUR,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Packer.
DUMONT,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Bensley.

Women.

ALICIA,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Ward.
JANE SHORE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.

Several lords of the council, guards, and attendants.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Duke of GLOSTER,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
Lord HASTINGS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
CATESBY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Gardner.
BELMOUR,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Hull.
DUMONT,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
DERBY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Evatt.
Servant,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Ledger.

Women.

ALICIA,	-	-	-	-	Miss Brunton.
JANE SHORE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.

Several lords of the council, guards, and attendants.

SCENE, London.

JANE SHORE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Tower. Enter the Duke of GLOCESTER, Sir
RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.*

Glocester.

THUS far success attends upon our councils,
And each event has answer'd to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd;
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have, with joint concurrence, nam'd me
Protector of the realm. My brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York, are lodg'd
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, fir,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.

Rat. Then take 'em to you,
And wear 'em long and worthily. You are
The last remaining male of princely York,
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of them.)
And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule,
The common-weal does her dependence make,
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cat. And yet to-morrow does the council meet,
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.
Who can expound this riddle ?

Gloft. That can I.
Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom;
And howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to baffle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no farther than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.

Cat. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power,
Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,
I own, I doubt of his inclining, much.

Gloft. I guess the man at whom your words would
point :

Hastings —

Cat. The same.

Gloft. He bears me great good-will.

Cat. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector,
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service :
But were he bid to cry, *God save King Richard*,
Then tell me in what terms he would reply ?
Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him :

I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory,
And whither that may lead him is most plain.
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.

Gloft. And yet this tough impracticable heart,
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl;
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,
And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.

Rat. The fair Alicia,
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty,

Cat. I fear, he fails in his allegiance there;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him till he loathes.

Gloft. No more, he comes.

Enter Lord HASTINGS.

Hast. Health, and the happiness of many days,
Attend upon your Grace.

Gloft. My good lord chamberlain,
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Hast. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Gloft. In right good time. Speak out your pleasure freely.

Hast. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Gloft. Say you, of Shore?

Hast. Once a bright star, that held her place on
high :

The first and fairest of our English dames,
While royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,
Her waining form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.
She never sees the sun, but thro' her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Gloft. Marry! the times are badly chang'd with
her,

From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masquing;
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A shew of mommery without a meaning.
My brother, rest and pardon to his soul,
Is gone to his account; for this his minion,
The revel rout is done—But you are speaking
Concerning her—I have been told, that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Hast. No farther, my good lord, than friendly
pity,
And tender-hearted charity allow.

Gloft. Go to; I did not mean to chide you for it.
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distress'd—On with your tale.

Hast. Thus it is, gracious sir, that certain officers,
Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,
Have seiz'd upon the lands which late she held,
By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

Gloft. Somewhat of this, but slightly, have I
heard ;
And tho' some counsellors of forward zeal,
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her ;
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

Hast. Good Heav'n, who renders mercy back for
mercy,
With open-handed bounty shall repay you :
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion,
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Gloft. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only :
Our farther and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong
At full redress'd. But I have other news,
Which must import us both ; for still my fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours : our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty crests—That for your pri-
vacy. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in JANE SHORE's House. Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Bel. How she has liv'd you have heard my tale already,
The rest your own attendance in her family,
Where I have found the means this day to place
you,
And nearer observation, best will tell you.
See, with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

J. Sh. My gentle neighbour, your good wishes
still

Pursue my hapless fortunes! Ah, good Belmour,
How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity?
Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep?
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,

To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman,

Whose friendly service you commended to me?

Bel. Madam, it is.

J. Sh. A venerable aspect. [*Aside.*

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
And worthily becomes his silver locks;
He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience;
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.

Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill, [*To Dum.*
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance
Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.

But to supply these golden vantages,
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.

Dum. You over-rate me much; and all my answer
Must be my future truth; let them speak for me,
And make up my deserving.

J. Sh. Are you of England?

Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my
birth;

At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days
Than these which now my failing age affords.

J. Sh. Alas! at Antwerp!—Oh, forgive my
tears! [*Weeping.*

They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.

You knew perhaps—Oh grief! oh shame!—my husband.

Dum. I knew him well—but stay this flood of anguish,

The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows :

Three years and more are past, since I was bid,

With many of our common friends, to wait him

To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,

Sprinked his clay-cold corse with holy drops,

According to our church's rev'rend rite,

And saw him laid in hallow'd ground, to rest.

J. Sh. Oh, that my soul had known no joy but him !

That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,

And dying slept in innocence beside him !

But now his dust abhors the fellowship,

And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. The lady Alicia

Attends your leisure.

J. Sh. Say I wish to see her. *[Exit Servant.]*

Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,

I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you

Of each unhappy circumstance, in which

Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.

[Exeunt Belmour and Dumont.]

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you thus ?

Still shall these sighs heave after one another,
These trickling drops chase one another still,
As if the posting messengers of grief
Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old Time come back?

J. Sh. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er past,
That I could wish to take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has
known,
Some of those years might pass for golden ones,
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us
Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,
What could we more than to behold a monarch,
Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

J. Sh. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him.
Form'd to delight, to love and to persuade.
" Impassive spirits and angelic natures
" Might have been charm'd, like yielding human
weakness,
" Stoop'd from their Heav'n, and listen'd to his talking.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;

And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest, and most lovely, was my curse.

Alic. Sure, something more than fortune join'd
your loves :

Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.

J. Sb. Name him no more :

He was the bane and ruin of my peace.

This anguish and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
E'er yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support ;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.

Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows ;
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern Protector,
And soothe his savage temper with thy beauty :
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

J. Sb. My form, alas ! has long forgot to please ;
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd ;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes ;
But haggard grief, lean-looking fallow care,

And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.
One only shadow of a hope is left me ;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your
cause ?

But wherefore should he not ? Hastings has eyes ;
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty ;
But yours shall charm him long.

J. Sh. Away, you flatterer !

Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy foolish hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures danc'd away :
May the remaining few know only friendship.
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
A partner there ; I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live ! live and reign for ever in my bosom ;

[*Embracing.*

Save and unrivall'd there possess thy own ;
And you, the brightest of the stars above,
Ye saints that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow.

If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
Than every other joy the world can give ;
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
Distraction and despair seize me on earth,
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

J. Sh. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art
true ;

Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee ;

[*Giving a casket.*

Receive this, all that I can call my own,
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee :
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine !

One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful doubting heart be still ;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the
good,

The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all ; “ the poor, the pris’ner,
“ The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
“ Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
“ Shall cry to Heav’n and pull a blessing on thee ; ”
Ev’n man, the mercilefs insulter man,
Man, who rejoices in our sex’s weakness,

Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

J. Sh. Why should I think that man will do for
me,

What yet he never did for wretches like me?
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd :
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love ;
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,
If poor weak woman swerve from virtue's rule,
If, strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame :
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain look back on what she was before ;
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Continues. Enter ALICIA, speaking to JANE SHORE
as entering.

Alicia.

No farther, gentle friend ; good angels guard you,
And spread their gracious wings about your slumbers.

The drowfy night grows on the world, and now
 The busy craftsmen and o'er-labour'd hind
 Forget the travail of the day in sleep :
 Care only wakes, and moping penliveness ;
 With meagre discontented looks they sit,
 And watch the waffing of the midnight taper.
 Such vigils muft I keep, fo wakes my foul,
 Reftlefs and felf-tormented ! Oh, falfe Haftings !
 Thou haft deftroy'd my peace. [*Knocking without.*
 What noife is that ?
 What vifitor is this, who with bold freedom,
 Breaks in upon the peaceful night and reft,
 With fuch a rude approach ?

Enter a Servant.

Ser. One from the court,
 Lord Haftings (as I think) demands my lady.
Alic. Haftings ! Be ftill, my heart, and try to
 meet him
 With his own arts : with falshood—But he comes.

*Enter Lord HASTINGS, fpeaks to a Servant as enter-
 ing.*

Haft. Difmifs my train, and wait alone without.
 Alicia here ! Unfortunate encounter !
 But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
 The great defcend to vifit the afflicted,
 When thus, unmindful of their reft, they come
 To footh the sorrows of the midnight mourner,

Comfort comes with them ; like the golden sun,
Dispels the fullen shades with her sweet influence,
And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Hast. 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a courtesy,
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
To nip and blast its favour, like a frost ;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd ;
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
And means to shew her grace.

Alic. My friend ! my lord.

Hast. Yes, lady, yours : none has a right more
ample
To task my pow'r than you.

Alic. I want the words,
To pay you back a compliment so courtly ;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wo' not die your debtor.

Hast. 'Tis well, madam.
But I would see your friend.

Alic. Oh, thou false lord !
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy dull indiff'rence :
But 'two' not be ; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee.

Hast. Are you wise ?
Have you the use of reason ? Do you wake ?
What means this raving, this transporting passion ?

Alic. Oh, thou cool traitor ! thou insulting ty-
rant.

Dost thou behold my poor distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means ? Art thou not false ?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd,
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy,
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons ;
And all because my soul has doated on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable ?

Haft. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love ?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness ?

Alic. What proof, alas ! have I not giv'n of love ?
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms ?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue ?
My prodigality has giv'n thee all ;
And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

Haft. Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,
Kept in the view, and cross'd at every turn ?
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert ;
E'er I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose ;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable midnight visits.

Hast. If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,

Yet take the friendly counsel of my love ;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,
That cursed curiosity seduce you,
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet ; but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
Go to—be yet advis'd—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn,
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely
Sit like a poor contented idiot down,
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me ? Ruin seize
thee,

And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt ?
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falshood ?
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shewn thee half unwilling to undo me :
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity,
Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it ;
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villainy.

Hast. Well, then, I own my heart has broke your chains.

Patient I bore the painful bondage long,
At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny ;
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,

Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph! do! and with gigantic pride
Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
Nor send his lightnings forth: no more his justice
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Hast. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
Be present to me now, my better angel!
Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
And if I have beyond-attonement sinned,
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy pray'r is heard—I go—but know, proud
lord,

Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,
With royal favour guarded round and grac'd;
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;
Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my feet;
See thy last breath with indignation go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below. [*Exit.*]

Hast. How fierce a fiend is passion! With what
wildness,

What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman!
Unhappy sex! whose easy yielding temper
Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike:
“ Each gust of inclination, uncontrol'd,

" Sweeps thro' their souls and sets them in an uproar ;

" Each motion of the heart rises to fury."

And love in their weak bosoms is a rage

As terrible as heat, and as destructive.

" So the wind roars o'er the wide fenceless ocean,

" And heaves the billows of the boiling deep,

" Alike from north, from south, from east, from west ;

" With equal force the tempest blows by turns

" From every corner of the seaman's compass."

But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims

Strife and her wrangling train ; of equal elements,

Without one jarring atom was she form'd,

And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship

Intrudes on your repose, and comes, thus late

To greet you with the tidings of success.

The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing,

To-morrow he expects you at the court ;

There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,

Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

J. Sh. Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend.

[*Kneeling.*

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,

And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Hast. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning much,

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,

To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

J. Sb. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speaking :

But tho' my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank you ;

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,
If pray'rs of such a wretch are heard on high,
That Heav'n will pay you back, when most you
need,

The grace and goodness you have shewn to me.

Hast. If there be ought of merit in my service,
Impute it there, where most 'tis due, to love ;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

J. Sb. Alas ! my lord——

Hast. Why bend thy eyes to earth ?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow ?
Why breathes that sigh, my love ? And wherefore
falls

This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweetness ?

J. Sb. If pity dwells within your noble breast,
(As sure it does) Oh, speak not to me thus.

Hast. Can I behold thee, and not speak of love ?
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire ;
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still ?

J. Sh. Cast round your eyes
Upon the high-born beauties of the court ;
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unfully'd all, and spotless ;
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms, and bless your virtuous bed ;
Nor turn your eyes this way, " where sin and misery,
" Like loathsome weeds, have over-run the soil,
" And the destroyer, Shame, has laid all waste."

Hast. What means this peevish, this fantastic
change ?

Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles ?
Where hast thou lost thy wit, and sportive mirth ?
That chearful heart which us'd to dance for ever,
And cast a day of gladness all around thee ?

J. Sh. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach ;
And for those foolish days of wanton pride,
My soul is justly humbled to the dust :
All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.
" Yet let the saints be witnesses to this truth,
" That now, tho' late, I look with horror back,
" That I detest my wretched self, and curse
" My past polluted life. All-judging Heav'n,
" Who knows my crimes, has seen my sorrow for
them."

Hast. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time
enough

To whine and mortify thyself with penance,
" When the decaying sense is pall'd with pleasure,

" And weary nature tires in her last stage ;

" Then weep and tell thy beads, when alt'ring
rheums

" Have stain'd the lustre of thy starry eyes,

" And failing palsies shake thy wither'd hand."

The present moment claims more gen'rous use ;

Thy beauty, night, and solitude, reproach me,

For having talk'd thus long—come let me press thee,

[*Laying hold of her.*

Pant on thy bosom, sink into thy arms,

And lose myself in the luxurious flood.

J. Shore. " Never ! by those chaste lights above,
I swear,

" My soul shall never know pollution more ;"

Forbear, my lord !—here let me rather die :

[*Kneeling.*

" Let quick destruction overtake me here,"

And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Hast. Away with this perverseness—'tis too much.

Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation !

[*Striving.*

J. Sh. Retire ! I beg you leave me—

Hast. Thus to coy it !——

With one who knows you too.——

J. Sh. For mercy's sake——

Hast. Ungrateful woman ! Is it thus you pay
My services ?——

J. Sh. Abandon me to ruin——

Rather than urge me——

Hast. This way to your chamber ; [*Pulling her.*
There if you struggle——

J. Sh. Help, oh, gracious Heaven!

Help! Save me! Help!

[*Exit.*

Enter DUMONT, he interposes.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake——

Haft. Hah! What art thou?—Begone?

Dum. My duty calls me

To my attendance on my mistress here.

“*J. Sh.* For pity, let me go”——

Haft. Avaunt! base groom——

At distance wait, and know thy office better.

Dum. “Forgo your hold, my lords!” ’tis most
unmanly

This violence——

Haft. Avoid the room this moment,

“Or I will tread thy soul out.”

Dum. No, my lord!——

The common ties of manhood call me now,

And bid me thus stand up in the defence

Of an oppress’d, unhappy, helpless woman.

Haft. And dost thou know me, slave?

Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!

I know thee well; know thee with each advantage

Which wealth, or power, or noble birth can give
thee.

I know thee, too, for one who stains those honours,

And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,

By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

Haft. ’Tis wond’rous well! I see, my saint-like
dame,

You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd
railer !

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou should'st find
I have as daring spirits in my blood

As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted :

And tho' no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,

" Titles, the servile courtier's lean reward,

" Sometimes the pay of virtue, but more oft

" The hire which greatness gives to slaves and sycophants,"

Yet Heav'n that made me honest, made me more

Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Haft. Insolent villain ! henceforth let this teach
thee *[Draws and strikes him.]*

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay, then, my lord, *[drawing]* learn you
by this, how well

! An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life.

[They fight.]

" *J. Sh.* Oh my distracting fears ! hold, for sweet
Heav'n."

[They fight, Dumont disarms Lord Hastings.]

Haft. Confusion ! baffled by a base-born hind !

Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference
now ?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,

The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue

(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you)

Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.

But wear your sword again ; and know, a lord
Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

Hast. Curse on my failing arm ! Your better fortune

Has given you vantage o'er me ; but perhaps
Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance.

[*Exit Hastings.*]

Enter JANE SHORE.

J. Sh. Alas ! what have ye done ? Know ye the
pow'r,
The mightiness, that waits upon this lord ?

Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress ; 'tis a
cause

In which Heaven's guards shall wait you. O pursue,
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,
Which urge you on to virtue ; let not danger,
Nor the incumb'ring world, make faint your purpose.
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

J. Sh. Oh, that my head were laid, my sad eyes
clos'd,

And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest !
My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal place ;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood ;
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty
Is made the scorner's jest ; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masques of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shews of pleasure.

J. Sh. Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,

Of friends, and all the means of life bereft?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes to serve you,

Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,

Far from the court and the tumultuous city.

Within an ancient forest's ample verge,

There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,

Built for convenience and the use of life :

Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,

A little garden, and a limpid brook,

By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd ;

No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,

Honest and true, with a well-meaning priest :

No faction, or domestic fury's rage,

Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,

When the contending nobles shook the land

With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.

Your virtue there may find a safe retreat

From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

J. Sh. Can there be so much happiness in store !

A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.

Haste, then, and thither let us take our flight,

E'er the clouds gather, and the wint'ry sky

Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go ! You glad my very soul.

Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me ;

Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,

And make your latter days of life most happy.

Oh, lady ! but I must not, cannot tell you,

How anxious I have been for all your dangers,

And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood ;
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
Nor serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow ;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there, and wanders thro' the grove no more ;
Warbling she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Court. Enter ALICIA, with a paper.

Alicia.

THIS paper to the great protector's hand,
With care and secrecy, must be convey'd ;
His bold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
And much devoted to the orphan king ;
On that I build : this paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.

Oh, jealousy ! thou bane of pleasing friendship,
 " Thou worst invader of our tender bosoms,"
 How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
 And turn our gentle natures into bitterness ?
 See where she comes ! once my heart's dearest blessing,
 Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,
 Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE.

" *J. Sh.* Now whither shall I fly to find relief ?
 " What charitable hand will aid me now ?
 " Will stay my falling steps, support my ruins,
 " And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort ?"

Oh, my Alicia !

Alic. What new grief is this ?
 What unforeseen misfortune has surpriz'd thee,
 That racks thy tender heart thus ?

J. Sh. Oh, Dumont !

Alic. Say what of him ?

J. Sh. That friendly, honest man,
 Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
 On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
 My surest trust was built, this very morn
 Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
 Forc'd from my house, and born away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you ! Can you guess the cause ?

J. Sh. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of
 me
 Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings! Ha!

J. Sh. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contain'd;
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.

*[She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens
and seems to read it.]*

Alic. *[Aside.]* Now for a wile,
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes:
"The wanderer may then look back to me,
"And turn to his forsaken home again;"
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

[Pulling out the other paper.]

J. Sh. But see the great protector comes this way,
"Attended by a train of waiting courtiers."
Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. *[Aside.]* For love and vengeance!

[She gives her the other paper.]

*Enter the Duke of GLOSTER, Sir RICHARD RAT-
CLIFFE, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other attendants.*

J. Sh. *[Kneeling.]* Oh, noble Gloster, turn thy
gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint,
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,

Intreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Gloſt. Arise, fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

[*Receiving the paper, and raising her.*]

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.
Y'have got a noble friend to be your advocate ;
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present Now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure ;
Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your griefs redress. Go to ! be comfort-
ed.

J. Sh. Good Heav'ns repay your highness for this
pity,

And show'r down blessings on your princely head.
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame,
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load. [*Exeunt J. Sh. and Alic.*]

Gloſt. Now by my holidame !

Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions ;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. What says her paper ?

[*Seeming to read.*]

Ha ! what is this ? Come nearer, Ratcliffe ! Cate-
by !

Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

[*He reads.*]

Wonder not, princely Gloſter, at the notice

*This paper brings you from a friend unknown ;
Lord Hastings is inclin'd to call you master,
And kneel to Richard, as to England's king ;
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
And draws his service, to King Edward's sons :
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
And he, and all his powers, attend you.*

Rat. 'Tis wonderful !

Cat. The means by which it came
Yet stranger too !

Gloft. You saw it given, but now.

Rat. She could not know the purport.

Gloft. No, 'tis plain —

She knows it not, it levels at her life ;
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cat. What hand foe'er it comes from, be assur'd,
It means your highness well —

Gloft. Upon the instant,
Lord Hastings will be here ; this morn I mean
To prove him to the quick ; then if he flinch,
No more but this — away with him at once,
He must be mine or nothing — But he comes !
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

[They whisper.]

Enter Lord HASTINGS.

Hast. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still ;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,

And worn to urge desire—I must possess her.
 The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
 E'er this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
 Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,
 And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

Gloss. This do, and wait me e'er the council sits.

[*Exeunt Rat. and Cat.*]

My'lord, y'are well encountred : here has been
 A fair petitioner this morning with us ;
 Believe me, she has won me much to pity her :
 Alas ! her gentle nature was not made
 To buffet with adversity. I told her
 How worthily her cause you had befriended ;
 How much for your good sake we meant to do,
 That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Haft. Your highness binds me ever to your service.

Gloss. You know your friendship is most potent
 with us,

And shares our power. But of this enough,
 For we have other matters for your ear ;
 The state is out of tune ; distracting fears,
 And jealous doubts, jar in our public counsels ;
 Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,
 Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
 With open scorn of government ; hence credit,
 And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.
 The golden streams of commerce are with-held,
 Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
 Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

Haft. The resty knaves are over-run with ease,
 As plenty ever is the nurse of faction ;
 If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd

Grow madly wanton, and repine ; it is
Because the reins of power are held too slack,
And reverend authority of late
Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

Gloſt. Beshrew my heart ! but you have well divin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
When the crown sits upon a baby brow ?
Plainly to speak ; hence comes the gen'ral cry,
And sum of all complaint : 'twill ne'er be well
With England (thus they talk) while children govern.

Hast. 'Tis true, the king is young ; but what of that ?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
While Gloſter's valour and most princely wisdom
So well supply our infant sov'reign's place,
His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

Gloſt. The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em for't)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of power, and subject to control ;
Scorn'd by my foes, and useleſs to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord ! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the common-weal ;
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
'Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Hast. Of this I am to learn ; as not supposing
A doubt like this——

Gloſt. Ay, marry, but there is——
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How, on a late occaſion, Doctor Shaw
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's iſſue? By right grave authority
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
A baſtard ſcion never ſhould be grafted
Upon a royal ſtock; from thence, at full
Diſcourſing on my brother's former contract
To Lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that ſame buxom widow
The queen he left behind him——

Haf. Ill befall

Such meddling prieſts, who kindle up confuſion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain ſcruples!
By Heav'n 'tis done in perfect ſpite to peace.
Did not the king,
Our royal maſter, Edward, in concurrence
With his eſtates aſſembled, well determine
What courſe the ſov'reign rule ſhould take hence for-
ward?

When ſhall the deadly hate of faction ceaſe,
When ſhall our long-divided land have reſt,
If every peeviſh, moody malecontent
Shall ſet the ſenſeleſs rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brain,
Each day with ſome fantaſtic giddy change?

Gloſt. What if ſome patriot, for the public good,
Should vary from your ſcheme, new-mould the ſtate?

Haf. Curſe on the innovating hand attempts it!
Remember him, the villain, righteous Heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance! Blaſt the traitor

And his pernicious counsels ; who for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars !

Gloft. You go too far, my lord.

Hast. Your highness' pardon——

Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth the battles ;
When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,
“ And cast beside some common way, a spectacle
“ Of horror and affright to passers by,”
Our groaning country bled at ev'ry vein ;
When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd ;
When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd :
When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
And swept away distinction ; peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles ; low were laid
The reverend crosier, and the holy mitre,
And desolation cover'd all the land ;
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,
And set once more that scene of blood before us ?

Gloft. How now ! so hot !

Hast. So brave, and so resolv'd.

Gloft. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
That you could arm your hand against my life ?

Hast. I hope your highness does not think I mean
it ;

No, Heav'n forefend that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Gloft. Oh, noble Hastings ! Nay, I must embrace
you ;

[Embraces him.]

By holy Paul, y'are a right honest man !
The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,
If when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,
And live, your king and country's best support :
For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

“ *Hast.* Accept what thanks a grateful heart should
pay,

“ Oh, princely Gloster ! judge me not ungentle,

“ Of manners rude, and insolent of speech,

“ If, when the public safety is in question,

“ My zeal flows warm and eager from my tongue.

“ *Gloft.* Enough of this : to deal in wordy com-
pliment

“ Is much against the plainness of my nature :

“ I judge you by myself, a clear true spirit,

“ And, as such, once more join you to my bosom,

“ Farewell, and be my friend.” [Exit Glost.

Hast. I am not read,

Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,

To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion,

The duke is surely noble ; but he touch'd me

Ev'n on the tend'rest point ; the master-string

That makes most harmony or discord to me.

I own the glorious subject fires my breast,

And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd ;

Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,

Beyond myself, I prize my native land :

On this foundation would I build my fame,

And emulate the Greek and Roman name ;

Think England's peace bought cheaply with my
blood,
And die with pleasure for my country's good. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Continues. Enter Duke of GLOSTER, RATCLIFFE,
and CATESBY.*

Gloster.

THIS was the sum of all : that he would brook
No alteration in the present state.
Marry, at last, the testy gentleman
Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance
But there I dropt the argument, and changing
The first design and purport of my speech,
I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.
Proceed we then in this foremention'd matter,
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Rat. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd
This lord had stood with us. " His friends are
wealthy ;

" Thereto, his own possessions large and mighty ;

" The vassals and dependants on his power

" Firm in adherence, ready, bold, and many ;"

His name had been of vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much instead.

Gloſt. This wayward and perverse declining from
us,

Has warranted at full the friendly notice,
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cat. If she had such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate ;
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand ? Why does she live,
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command ?

Rat. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your message ;

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;
His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Gloſt. Your counsel likes me well, it shall be followed.

She waits without, attending on her suit,
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby.*]

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is !
A moppet made of prettiness and pride ;

That oftener does her giddy fancies change,
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours—
Now, shame upon it ! was our reason given
For such a use ! “ To be thus puff’d about
“ Like a dry leaf, an idle straw, a feather,
“ The sport of every whiffling blast that blows ?
“ Beshrew my heart, but it is wond’rous strange ;”
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in them,
That masters ev’n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Oh ! you are come most fitly. We have ponder’d
On this your grievance : and tho’ some there are,
Nay, and those great ones too, who wou’d enforce
The rigour of our power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy hand ; yet fear not you :
We’ve ta’en you to our favour ; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

J. Sh. The blessings of a heart with anguish broken,

And rescu’d from despair, attend your highness.
Alas ! my gracious lord, what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me ?
“ If in the days of all my past offences,
“ When most my heart was lifted with delight,
“ If I withheld my morsel from the hungry,
“ Forgot the widow’s want, and orphan’s cry ;
“ If I have known a good I have not shar’d,
“ Nor call’d the poor to take his portion with me,

" Let my worst enemies stand forth, and now

" Deny the succour, which I gave not then."

Gloſt. Marry there are, tho' I believe them not,
Who ſay you meddle in affairs of ſtate :
That you preſume to prattle, like a buſy-body,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o' th' council
What ſits the order of the common-weal.

J. Sh. Oh, that the buſy world, at leaſt in this,
Would take example from a wretch like me !
None then would waſte their hours in foreign
thoughts,

Forget themſelves, and what concerns their peace,

" To tread the mazes of fantaſtic falſhood.

" To haunt their idle ſounds and flying tales,

" Thro' all the giddy, noiſy courts of rumour ;

" Malicious ſlander never would have leiſure"

To ſearch with prying eyes, for faults abroad,

If all, like me, conſider'd their own hearts,

And wept the ſorrows which they found at home.

Gloſt. Go to ! I know your pow'r ; and tho' I truſt
not

To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn

That Haſtings is profeſs'd your loving vaſſal.

But fair befall your beauty : uſe it wiſely,

And it may ſtand your fortunes much in ſtead,

Give back your forfeit land with large increaſe,

And place you high in ſafety and in honour.

Nay, I could point a way, the which purſuing,

You ſhall not only bring yourſelf advantage,

But give the realm much worthy cauſe to thank you.

J. Sh. Oh ! where or how—Can my unworthy
hand

Become an instrument of good to any?
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
To yield obedience to your dread command.

Gloft. Why, that's well said—Thus then—Ob-
serve me well,

The state, for many high and potent reasons,
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
For the imperial weight of England's crown—

J. Sh. Alas! for pity.

Gloft. Therefore have resolv'd
To set aside their unavailing infancy,
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
This, tho' of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.

J. Sh. Does he? Does Hastings?

Gloft. Ay, Hastings.

J. Sh. Reward him for the noble deed, just
Heav'ns :

For this one action, guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance,
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame.
Let never-fading honours flourish round him,
And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end :

“ Let him know nothing else but good on earth,

“ And everlasting blessedness hereafter.”

Gloft. How now !

J. Sh. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones !
Shall they be left a prey to savage power ?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to Heaven for help, and not be heard ?
Impossible ! Oh, gallant, generous Hastings,

Go on, pursue ! assert the sacred cause :
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side.

Gloft. You're passing rich in this same heav'nly
speech,

And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me !
My favour is not bought with words like these.

Go to—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

J. Sh. No, tho' the royal Edward has undone
me,

He was my king, my gracious master still ;

“ He lov'd me too, tho' 'twas a guilty flame,

“ And fatal to my peace, yet still he lov'd me ;

“ With fondness, and with tenderness he doated,

“ Dwelt in my eyes, and liv'd but in my smiles :”

And can I—O my heart abhors the thought !

Stand by, and see his children robb'd of right ?

Gloft. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me
further !

None of your arts, your feigning and your foolery ;

Your dainty squeamish coying it to me ;

Go—to your lord, your paramour, begone !

Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,

And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.

You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,

And make him yield obedience to my will.

Do it—or woe upon thy harlot's head.

J. Sh. Oh, that my tongue had ev'ry grace of
speech,

Great and commanding as the breath of kings,

“ Sweet as the poet’s numbers, and prevailing
“ As soft persuasion to a love-sick maid ;”
That I had art and eloquence divine,
To pay my duty to my master’s ashes,
And plead, till death, the cause of injur’d innocence.

Gloft. Ha ! Dost thou brave me, minion ! Dost
thou know
How vile, how very a wretch, my pow’r can make
thee ?

“ That I can let loose fear, distress, and famine,
“ To hunt thy heels, like hell-hounds, thro’ the
world ;”

That I can place thee in such abject state,
As help shall never find thee ; where, repining,
Thou shalt sit down and gnaw the earth for anguish ;
Groan to the pitiless winds without return ;
Howl like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery ?

J. Sh. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turn’d forth and driven to wander like a vagabond,
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren wild, and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
E’er I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan who has none to save him.

Gloft. ’Tis well—we’ll try the temper of your
heart,
What ho ! who waits without ?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants.

Rat. Your highness’ pleasure——

Gloft. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet forth !

Spurn her into the ſtreet ; there let her periſh,
And rot upon a dunghill. Thro' the city
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
Prefume to give her comfort, food, or harbour ;
Who miniſters the ſmalleſt comfort, dies.
Her houſe, her coſtly furniture and wealth,
“ The purchaſe of her looſe luxurious life,”
We ſeize on, for the profit of the ſtate.
Away ! Be gone !

J. Sh. Oh, thou moſt righteous judge—
Humbly behold, I bow myſelf to thee,
And own thy juſtice in this hard decree :
No longer, then, my ripe offences ſpare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet ſince 'tis all my wretchedneſs can give,
For my paſt crimes my forfeit life receive ;
No pity for my ſufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgivenefs in the grave.

[*Exit J. Shore, guarded by Cateſby and others.*]

Gloft. So much for this. Your project's at an end.
[*To Rat.*

This idle toy, this hilding ſcorns my power,
And ſets us all at naught. See that a guard
Be ready at my call.—

Rat. The council waits
Upon your highneſs' leiſure.—

Gloft. Bid them enter.

Enter the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, Earl of DERBY, Bishop of ELY, Lord HASTINGS, and others as to the council. The Duke of GLOSTER takes his place at the upper end, then the rest sit.

Derb. In happy times we are assembled here,
To point the day, and fix the solemn pomp,
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,
Upon our sov'reign Edward's youthful brow.

Hast. Some busy meddling knaves, 'tis said, there
are,

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right ;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
T' appoint the order of the coronation !
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainfayers.

Derb. We all attend to know your highness' pleasure.
[To Gloster.

Glost. My lords, a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent and just, and careful for the state ;
Therefore, to your most grave determination
I yield myself in all things ; and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching
drugs,
Practice against our person and our life ?

Hast. So much I hold the king your highness' debtor,

So precious are you to the common-weal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Gloft. Then judge yourselves, convince your eyes
of truth :

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,
[*Pulling up his sleeves.*

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,
Like some untimely product of the seasons.
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.
This is the forcery of Edward's wife,
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,
And other like confed'rate midnight hags,
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
And conjurations horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
And set the ministers of hell at work,
To torture and despoil me of my life.

Hast. If they have done this deed—

Gloft. If they have done it!

Talk'st thou to me of If's, audacious traitor!
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,
And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
Nay start not, lords—What ho! a guard there,
Sirs!

Enter Guards.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.
Seize him, and bear him instantly away.

He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul,
I will not dine before his head be brought me.
Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done :
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[*Exeunt GLOSTER, and the Lords following.*]

Manent Lord HASTINGS, RATCLIFFE, and Guards.

Hast. What ! and no more but this—How ! to the
scaffold :

Oh, gentle Ratcliffe ! tell me, do I hold thee ?
Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
To break, to struggle thro' this dread confusion ?
For surely death itself is not so painful
As is this sudden horror and surprize.

Rat. You heard, the duke's commands to me were
absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
With all good speed you may. Summon your cou-
rage,

And be yourself ; for you must die this instant.

Hast. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly
counsel

And die as a man should ; 'tis somewhat hard,
To call my scatter'd spirits home at once :
But since what must be, must be—let necessity
Supply the place of time and preparation,
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,
'Tis but to venture on that common hazard,
Which many a time in battle I have run ;
“ 'Tis but to do, what at that very moment,

" In many nations of the peopled earth,
" A thousand and a thousand shall do with me ;"
'Tis but to close my eyes, and shut out day-light,
To view no more the wicked ways of men,
No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
And be a weeping witness of the woes,
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass—I will I must
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
And hold him to my heart—O Hastings! Hastings!

Hast. Alas! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment,

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions ;
To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
And shock the peace of my departing soul ?
Away, I pr'ythee leave me !

Alic. Stop a minute——
Till my full griefs find passage—Oh, the tyrant !
Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

Hast. What means thy frantic grief ?

Alic. I cannot speak——
But I have murder'd thee—Oh, I could tell thee !

Hast. Speak and give ease to thy conflicting passion,
Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense,
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
Break in at once ! this way and that they snatch,

They tear my hurry'd soul : All claim attention,
And yet not one is heard. Oh ! speak, and leave
me,

For I have business would employ an age,—
And but a minute's time to get it done in.

Alic. That, that's my grief—'tis I that urge thee
on,

Thus haunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

Hast. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak
hand

Bring on this mighty ruin ? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement ?

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames :
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I know not what—told the protector,
That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee
To plot against his greatness—He believ'd it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel !)
And, while I meant destruction on her head,
H' has turn'd it all on thine.

“ *Hast.* Accursed jealousy !

“ Oh, merciless, wild, and unforgiving fiend !

“ Blindfold it runs to undistinguish'd mischief,

“ And murders all it meets. Curst be its rage,

“ For there is none so deadly ; doubly curs'd

“ Be all those easy fools who give it harbour ;

“ Who turn a monster loose among mankind,

“ Fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence ;

" Baneful as death, and horrible as hell.

" *Alic.* If thou wilt curse, curse rather thine own
falshood ;

" Curse the lewd maxims of thy perjur'd sex,

" Which taught thee first to laugh at faith and justice ;

" To scorn the solemn sanctity of oaths,

" And make a jest of a poor woman's ruin :

" Curse thy proud heart, and thy insulting tongue,

" That rais'd this fatal fury in my soul,

" And urg'd my vengeance to undo us both."

Hast. Oh, thou inhuman ! Turn thy eyes away,
And blast me not with their destructive beams :

Why should I curse thee with my dying breath ?

Begone ! and let me die in peace.

Alic. Can'st thou—Oh, cruel Hastings, leave me
thus !

Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me !

While with an agonizing heart, I swear,

By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,

The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,

My hate was on my rival bent alone.

Oh ! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,

A danger to thy life, I would have dy'd,

I would have met it for thee, and made bare

My ready faithful breast to save thee from it.

Hast. Now mark ! and tremble at Heaven's just
award :

While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge,

Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,

Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me :

Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,

And everlasting anguish be thy portion :
For me, the snares of death are wound about me,
And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
Oh! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh! yet before I go for ever from thee,
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, [Kneeling.
And, in compassion of my strong affliction,
Say, is it possible you can forgive
The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?
For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
" Desir'd to death, and doated to distraction,"
This day of horror never should have known us.

Hast. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sor-
rows. [Raising her.

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
I see the hand of Heav'n is arm'd against me;
And, in mysterious Providence, decrees
To punish me by thy mistaken hand.
Most righteous doom! for, Oh, while I behold
thee,

Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
And charge thy ruin on me; thy fair fame,
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
Oh, that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,
But half so easily as I can pardon!

Hast. Here then exchange we mutually forgiveness:

So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
As here I part without one angry thought,
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
And begging Heav'n to bless and to support thee.

Rat. My lord, dispatch; the duke has sent to chide me,

For loitering in my duty——

Hast. I obey.

Alic. Infatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger! Give him blood for blood:
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast
him!

“Some horrid, cursed kind of death o’ertake him,

“Sudden, and in the fulness of his sins!”

That he may know how terrible it is,

To want that moment he denies thee now.

Hast. This rage is all in vain, “that tears thy bosom;

“Like a poor bird that flutters in its cage,

“Thou beat’st thyself to death.” Retire, I beg
thee;

To see thee thus, thou know’st not how it wounds
me;

Thy agonies are added to my own,

And make the burthen more than I can bear.

Farewell—Good angels visit thy afflictions,
And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

Alic. Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying
hand.

Now strike me dead——

Haft. One thing I had forgot——

I charge thee, by our present common miseries;
By our past loves, if yet they have a name;
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,
Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend;
Thou know’st who ’tis I mean; Oh! should’st thou
wrong her,

Just Heav’n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make ’em know no end—Remember this,
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell, for ever. [*The guards carry Hastings off.*]

Alic. For ever! Oh, for ever!

Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever!
My rival, too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And as he parted, left a blessing for her:
Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever?
No; since her fatal beauty was the cause
Of all my sufferings, let her share my pains;
Let her, like me, of ev’ry joy forlorn,
Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;
“Like me, to darkness and to darkness run,
“Abhor the day, and curse the golden sun;”
Cast ev’ry good, and ev’ry hope behind;
Detest the works of nature; loath mankind:

Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,
Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair;
And prove the torments of the last despair. [Exit.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Street. Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Dumont.

YOU saw her, then ?

Belm. I met her, as returning,
In solemn penance from the public cross.
Before her, certain rascal officers,
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
" On either side her march'd an ill-look'd priest,
" Who with severe, with horrid haggard eyes,
" Did, ever and anon, by turns, upbraid her,
" And thunder in her trembling ear damnation."
Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
Some pitying—but those, alas ! how few !
The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind,
With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
Hooting and railing, and with villainous hands

Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs !
How did she bear it ?

Bel. With the gentlest patience ;
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look ;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd,
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung ;
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread ;
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.
Yet, silent still she pass'd and unrepining ;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
To Heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

Dum. When was this piteous sight ?

Bel. These last two days.
You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd.
During that time, altho' I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience
To give her some relief, but all in vain ;
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,
And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten ;
Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice ;
So Heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

Bel. Mean you to see her, thus, in your own
form ?

Dum. I do.

Bel. And have you thought upon the consequence ?

Dum. What is there I should fear ?

Bel. Have you examin'd
Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions ?
Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
That wrath and vengeance never may return ?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep ?

“ *Dum.* Why dost thou search so deep, and urge
my memory,

“ To conjure up my wrongs to life again ?

“ I have long labour'd to forget myself,

“ To think on all time backward, like a space

“ Idle and void, where nothing e'er had being ;

“ But thou hast peopled it again : Revenge

“ And jealousy renew their horrid forms,

“ Shoot all their fires, and drive me to distraction.

“ *Bel.* Far be the thought from me ! My care was
only

“ To arm you for the meeting : better were it

“ Never to see her, than to let that name

“ Recall forgotten rage, and make the husband.

“ Destroy the gen'rous pity of Dumont.”

Dum. O thou hast fet my busy brain at work,
And now she musters up a train of images,
Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
And sunk in deep oblivion—Oh, that form !
That angel face on which my dotage hung !
How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issu'd at my eyes—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields ;
What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,
Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty ?
What could her king do more ?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy—

Dum. Oh, that day !
The thought of it must live for ever with me.
I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home !
Within his chariot, by his side she sat,
And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,
'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
Her eyes encounter'd mine—Oh ! then my friend !
Oh ! who can paint my grief and her amazement !
As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale ;
And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her ;
Then with a shriek, heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,
While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung—
Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
With courteous action woo'd her oft to turn ;
Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain ;

Ev'n to the last she bent her fight towards me,
And follow'd me——till I had lost myself.

Bel. Alas, for pity ! Oh ! those speaking tears !
Could they be false ? Did she not suffer with you ?
For though the king by force possess'd her person,
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you ;
If all her former woes were not enough,
Look on her now ; behold her where she wanders,
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
With no one hand to help ; and tell me then,
If ever misery were known like hers ?

Dum. And can she bear it ? Can that delicate
frame

Endure the beating of a storm so rude ?
Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she——
Intreat for bread, and want the needful raiment.
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather ?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her ;
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,
Too rough to breathe upon her ; cheerfulness
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow—
Now sad and shelterless, perhaps, she lies,
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
It is too much——Hence with her past offences,

They are aton'd at full——Why stay we, then ?

Oh ! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers :
Her guard, tho' set with strictest watch to keep
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here let us then divide ; each in his round
To search her sorrows out ; whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter JANE SHORE, her hair hanging loose on her shoulders, and bare-footed.

J. Sh. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, oh, my
soul !

For are not thy transgressions great and numberless ?
Do they not cover thee like rising floods,
And press thee like a weight of waters down ?

“ Does not the hand of righteousness afflict thee ?

“ And who shall plead against it ? Who shall say

“ To pow'r almighty, thou hast done enough ;

“ Or bid his dreadful rod of vengeance stay ? ”

Wait then with patience, till the circling hours

Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,

And lay thee down in death. “ The hireling thus

“ With labour drudges out the painful day,

“ And often looks with long expecting eyes—

“ To see the shadows rise, and be dismiss’d.”

And hark, methinks the roar that late pursu’d me,
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
And softens into silence. Does revenge
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?
My guard, too, that observ’d me still so close,
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,
My spirits fail at once—This is the door
Of my Alicia—Blessed opportunity!
I’ll steal a little succour from her goodness,
Now while no eye observes me.

[*She knocks at the door.*]

Enter a Servant.

Is your lady,

My gentle friend, at home! Oh! bring me to her.

[*Going in.*]

Ser. Hold, mistress, whither would you?

[*Pulling her back.*]

J. Sh. Do you not know me?

Ser. I know you well, and know my orders, too:
You must not enter here—

J. Sh. Tell my Alicia,
’Tis I would see her.

Ser. She is ill at ease,
And will admit no visitor.

J. Sh. But tell her
’Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—

Ser. 'Tis all in vain,—

Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you.

[Shuts the door and exit.]

J. Sb. It was not always thus ; the time has been,
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here ; “ when this good house
“ Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me : ”
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me :
But now 'tis otherwise ; and those who bless'd me,
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here ?

[She sits down at the door.]

Enter ALICIA in disorder, two Servants following.

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and
baseness

Hangs on my door ; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry ?

J. Sb. A very beggar and a wretch, indeed ;
One driven by strong calamity to seek
For succours here ; one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days ;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread ?
I know thee not—Go—hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd
it,

Or cast it on the waters—Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey ;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them—I know thee not.

J. Sh. And yet there was a time, when my
Alicia

Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing,
And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd without
me ;

“ When pair'd like turtles, we were still together ;
“ When often as we prattled arm in arm,”
Inclining fondly to me she has sworn,
She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

Alic. Ha ! say'st thou ! Let me look upon thee
well—

'Tis true—I know thee now—A mischief on thee !
Thou art that fatal fair, that curst she,
That set my brain a madding. Thou hast robb'd me ;
Thou hast undone me—Murder ! Oh, my Hastings !
See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me !
“ Give me him back again, thou soft deluder,
“ Thou beauteous witch.”

J. Sh. Alas ! I never wrong'd you—

“ Oh ! then be good to me ; have pity on me ;
“ Thou never knew'st the bitterness of want,
“ And may'st thou never know it. Oh ! bestow
“ Some poor remain, the voiding of thy table,
“ A morsel to support my famish'd soul.”

Alic. Avaunt ! and come not near me—

J. Sh. To thy hand

I trusted all ; gave my whole store to thee,
Nor do I ask it back ; allow me but

The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay! tell not me! Where is thy king, thy
Edward,

And all the smiling cringing train of courtiers,
That bent the knee before thee?

J. Sh. Oh! for mercy!

Alic. Mercy! I know it not—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells;
This is her house, where the sun never dawns,
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark! something cracks above! it shakes, it tot-
ters!

And see, the nodding ruin falls to crush me!
'Tis fall'n, 'tis here! I felt it on my brain!

"1 *Ser.* This sight disorders her—

"2 *Ser.* Retire, dear lady—

"And leave this woman"—

Alic. Let her take my counsel:

Why should'st thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy
heart,

And rid thyself of this detested being,
I wo' not linger long behind thee here.

A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me;
And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.
Ha! what art thou! thou horrid headless trunk?

It is my Hastings! see he wafts me on!

Away! I go, I fly! I follow thee!

"But come not thou with mischief-making beauty

“ To interpose between us, look not on him,
 “ Give thy fond arts and thy delusions o’er,
 “ For thou shalt never, never part us more.

[She runs off, her servants following.]

J. Sh. Alas ! she raves ; her brain, I fear, is
 turn’d.

In mercy look upon her, gracious Heav’n,
 Nor visit her for any wrong to me.

Sure I am near upon my journey’s end ;

My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,

And dancing shadows swim before my sight.

I can no more, *[Lies down.]* receive me, thou cold
 earth,

Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
 And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR.

Bel. Upon the ground !

Thy miseries can never lay thee lower,

Look up, thou poor afflicted one ! thou mourner,

Whom none has comforted ! Where are thy friends,

The dear companions of thy joyful days,

Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,

Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,

And bind thee to their bosoms ? Thus with thee,

Thus let us live, and let us die, they said,

“ For sure thou art the sister of our loves,

“ And nothing shall divide us”—Now where are
 they ?

J. Sh. Ah, Belmour ! where indeed ? They stand
 aloof,

And view my desolation from afar ?

“ When they pass by, they shake their heads in scorn,

“ And cry, behold the harlot and her end !”

And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.

Alas ! there may be danger ; get thee gone ;

Let me not pull a ruin on thy head.

Leave me to die alone, for I am fall’n

Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head ; for I am come
To chase away despair. Behold ! where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
Is hastening to thy aid——

J. Sh. Dumont ! Ha ! where !

[Raising herself, and looking about.]

Then Heav’n has heard my pray’r ; his very name
Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.
Has he then ’scap’d the snare ?

Bel. He has ; but see——

He comes unlike to that Dumont you knew,
For now he wears your better angel’s form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE.

J. Sh. Speak, tell me ? Which is he ? And ho !
what would

This dreadful vision ! See it comes upon me——

It is my husband——Ah !

[She swoons.]

Sh. She faints ! support her !

“ Sustain her head, while I infuse this cordial

“ Into her dying lips—from spicy drugs,
“ Rich herbs and flow’rs, the potent juice is drawn ;
“ With wond’rous force it strikes the lazy spirits,
“ Drives them around, and wakens life anew.”

Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.

But see, she stirs ! And the returning blood
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle

Upon her ashy cheek——

Sb. So—gently raise her— [*Raising her up.*]

J. Sb. Ha ! What art thou ? Belmour !

Bel. How fare you, lady ?

J. Sb. My heart is thrill’d with horror——

Bel. Be of courage——

Your husband lives ! ’tis he, my worthiest friend——

J. Sb. Still art thou there !—Still dost thou hover
round me !

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade !

Bel. ’Tis he himself !—he lives ! look up——

J. Sb. I dare not !

Oh ! that my eyes could shut him out for ever——

Sb. Am I so hateful, then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with horror ? Since I’m grown
A burthen to the world, myself, and thee,
Wou’d I had ne’er surviv’d to see thee more.

J. Sb. Oh ! thou most injur’d—dost thou live, indeed !

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head ;
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns ;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night !
And shield me with thy fable wings for ever.

Sb. Why dost thou turn away?—Why tremble
thus?

Why thus indulge thy fears? and in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.
My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,
With tender joy, with fond forgiving love,
And all the longings of my first desires.

“ *J. Sb.* No, arm thy brow with vengeance and
appear

“ The minister of Heaven’s inquiring justice.

“ Array thyself all terrible for judgment,

“ Wrath in thy eyes, and thunder in thy voice;

“ Pronounce my sentence, and if yet there be

“ A woe I have not felt, inflict it on me.

“ *Sb.* The measure of my sorrows is compleat!

“ And I am come to snatch thee from injustice.

“ The hand of pow’r no more shall crush thy weak-
ness,

“ Nor proud oppression grind thy humble soul.

“ *J. Sb.* Art thou not risen by miracle from
death?

“ Thy shroud is fall’n from off thee, and the grave

“ Was bid to give thee up, that thou might’st come

“ The messenger of grace and goodness to me,

“ To seal my peace, and bless me e’er I go.

“ Oh! let me then fall down beneath thy feet,

“ And weep my gratitude for ever there;

“ Give me your drops, ye soft descending rains,

“ Give me your streams, ye never-ceasing springs,

" That my sad eyes may still supply my duty,

" And feed an everlasting flood of sorrow.

Sb. Waste not thy feeble spirits—I have long

" Beheld, unknown, thy mourning and repentance ;

" Therefore my heart has set aside the past,

" And holds thee white, as unoffending innocence ;

" Therefore in spite of cruel Gloster's rage,

" Soon as my friend had broke my prison doors,

" I flew to thy assistance." Let us haste,

Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,

Forfake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

J. Sb. What shall I say to you ? But I obey—

Sb. Lean on my arm——

J. Sb. Alas ! I'm wond'rous faint :

But that's not strange, I have not eat these three
days.

Sb. Oh, merciless ! " Look here, my love, I've
brought thee

" Some rich preserves——

" *J. Sb.* How can you be so good ?

" But you were ever thus. I well remember

" With what fond care, what diligence of love,

" You lavish'd out your wealth to buy me pleasures,
fures,

" Preventing every wish : have you forgot

" The costly string of pearl you brought me home,

" And ty'd about my neck ?——How could I leave
you ?

" *Sb.* Taste some of this, or this——

" *J. Sb.* You're strangely alter'd——

" Say, gentle Belmour, is he not ? How pale

" Your visage is become ? Your eyes are hollow ;

" Nay, you are wrinkled too——Alas, the day !

" My wretchedness has cost you many a tear,

" And many a bitter pang, since last we parted.

" *Sb.* No more of that——Thou talk'st, but do'st
not eat.

" *J. Sb.* My feeble jaws forget their common office,

" My tasteless tongue cleaves to the clammy roof,

" And now a gen'ral loathing grows upon me."

Oh ! I am sick at heart !——

Sb. Thou murd'rous sorrow !

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still !

Must she then die ! Oh, my poor penitent !

Speak peace to thy sad heart : she hears me not ;

Grief masters ev'ry sense——" help me to hold her"——

Enter CATESBY, with a guard.

Cat. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state——

Bel. What means this violence ?——

[Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.]

Cat. Have we not found you,

In scorn of the protector's strict command,

Assisting this base woman, and abetting

Her infamy ?

Sb. Infamy on thy head !

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority !

I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,

And she that bore thee was an Æthiop to her.

Cat. You'll answer this at full——Away with 'em.

Sb. Is charity grown treason to your court ?

What honest man would live beneath such rulers ?

I am content that we should die together——

Cat. Convey the men to prison ; but for her,
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

J. Sh. I will not part with him——for me!——
for me!

Oh ! must he die for me !

[*Following him as he is carried off—She falls.*]

Sh. Inhuman villains ! [*Breaks from the guards.*]
Stand off ! The agonies of death are on her——
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

J. Sh. Was this blow wanting to compleat my
ruin !

Oh ! let him go, ye ministers of terror.
He shall offend no more, for I will die,
And yield obedience to your cruel master.
Tarry a little, but a little longer,
And take my last breath with you.

Sh. Oh, my love !

“ Why have I liv’d to see this bitter moment,
“ This grief by far surpassing all my former ?”
Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,
With such an earnest, such a piteous look,
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning
Thou could’st not speak ?——

J. Sh. Forgive me !——but forgive me !

Sh. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul
Accords to thee, and begs of Heav’n to shew
thee ;

May such befall me at my latest hour,
And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

J. Sh. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in
peace——

'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now——
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd
you?

But I have nothing left me to bestow,
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, Heav'n!
[Dies.]

Bel. There fled the soul,
And left her load of misery behind.

Sh. Oh, my heart's treasure! Is this pale sad vi-
sage
All that remains of thee? "Are these dead eyes
"The light that cheer'd my soul?" Oh, heavy
hour!

But I will fix my trembling lips to thine,
'Till I am cold and senseless quite, as thou art.
What, must we part, then?——will you——
[To the guards taking him away.]
Fare thee well—— [Kissing her.]

Now execute your tyrant's will, and lead me
To bonds, or death, 'tis equally indifferent.

Bel. Let those, who view this sad example,
know,
What fate attends the broken marriage vow;
And teach their children, in succeeding times,
No common vengeance waits upon these crimes,
When such severe repentance could not save
From want, from shame, and an untimely grave.

[Exeunt omnes.]

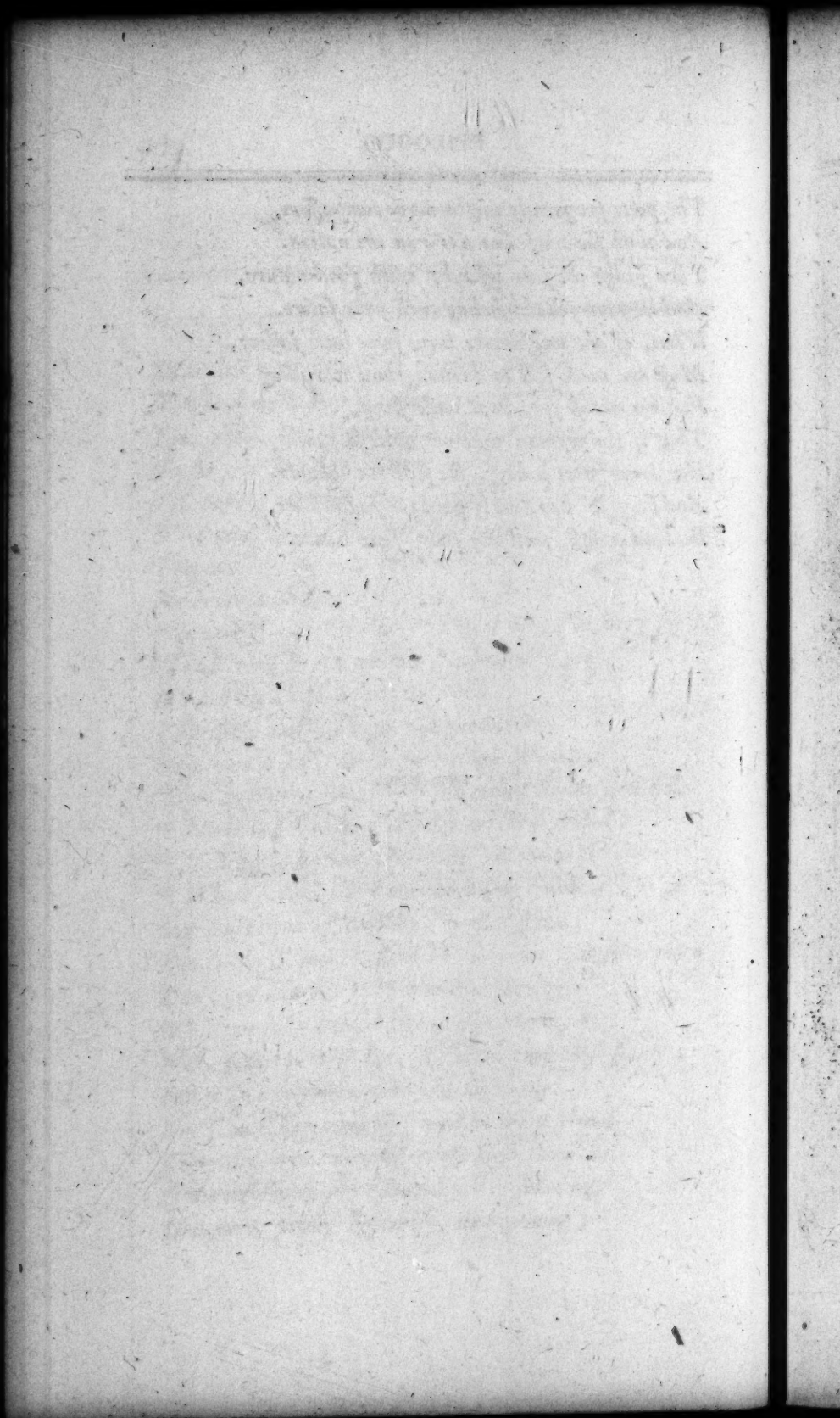
EPILOGUE.

*THE modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,
Who lead with horrid husbands, decent lives ;
You, who, for all you are in such a taking,
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,
Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making ;
What can we say your pardon to obtain ?
This matter here was prov'd against poor Jane :
She never once deny'd it ; but, in short,
Whimper'd—and cry'd—" Sweet Sir, I'm sorry for't."
'Twas well he met a kind, good-natur'd soul,
We are not all so easy to control :
I fancy one might find in this good town,
Some wou'd ha' told the gentleman his own ;
Have answer'd smart—" To what do you pretend,
" Blockhead ?—As if I must not see a friend :
" Tell me of hackney coaches—Jaunts to th' city—
" Where should I buy my china ?—Faith I'll fit ye"—
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit ;
You !—lords and masters !—was not that some merit ?
Don't you allow it to be virtuous bearing,
When we submit thus to your domineering ?
Well, peace be with her, she did wrong most surely ;
But so do many more who look demurely.
Nor shou'd our mourning madam weep alone,
There are more ways of wickedness than one.
If the reforming stage should fall to shaming
Ill-nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming ;*

EPILOGUE.

*The poets frequently might move compassion,
And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.
Then judge the fair offender with good-nature,
And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.
What, if our neighbours have some little failing,
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing?
For her excuse too, be it understood,
That if the woman was not quite so good,
Her lover was a king, she flesh and blood.
And since sb' has dearly paid the sinful score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.*

THE END.





No III.

EARL OF ESSEX.



De Witte ad viv. pinx.

J. Nalpin Sculp.

*M^r WROUGHTON as EARL of ESSEX.
I've serv'd you, Madam, with the utmost peril,
And ever glory'd in this illustrious danger.*

Dublin Publish'd by William Jones, N^o 86 Dame Street.

Act IV.



Smirke pinx.

Dublin Publish'd by William Jones, N^o 86 Dame Street.

P. Helyar Sculp.



THE
EARL OF ESSEX.

A
TRAGEDY.

BY HENRY JONES. *of Drogheda.*

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, IN COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

DUBLIN :

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL,
FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCII.



T O
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
P H I L I P,
EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, &c.
Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

MY LORD,

THAT you may be induced to read this dedication through, I shall begin by assuring you, that I do not intend to pay you one compliment. To praise you is unnecessary on all hands; to your Lordship, it is offensive; and for the public, they do not want to be informed of your character: it lives, at present, in the mouths of all men, and posterity will find it in the history of Europe.

My design, my Lord, is to express my own gratitude, not to delineate your merit. 'Twas your Lordship first took notice of me, in my original obscurity, whence you brought me into life, and have since continued to encourage me by your countenance and favour; and I cannot help confessing, that I have a kind of honest pride in having it known, that your Lordship thought me worthy to be taken under your protection.

These, my Lord, are the general obligations that I owe you, of which I have wished to raise some monument, that may remain as long as my name shall be re-

DEDICATION.

membered ; but I have more particular reasons for presenting you with this tragedy, as it was your Lordship first pointed out to me the subject, and when it was finished gave me the first assurance of its success, by your approbation. I could not therefore avoid taking advantage of this opportunity, to acknowledge, publicly, all these favours ; and to assure you, that I am

Your Lordship's most obliged,

Most obedient, and

Very humble servant,

HENRY JONES.

HENRY JONES.

GENIUS is perhaps of no country—it is also attached to no condition—JONES was a bricklayer, and some genius, it may be presumable, there was where we know there was no culture. He was born in IRELAND, where genius is by no means rare.

When the great Lord CHESTERFIELD went over there, as Lord Lieutenant of that kingdom, the talents of JONES were recommended to his lordship's protection, and the consequence was his drawing our author over to this country with him, and by his patronage endeavouring to promote his interest and advance his reputation.

JONES, with the kind assistance of his patron, had completed his tragedy of the EARL of ESSEX ; and upon its performance, he rose considerably in public estimation—the play ran twelve nights. And now little seemed wanting to complete his future success in life—his muse and himself thus powerfully supported.

But there appears to be no axiom more settled in the code of human conduct, than that success inflates a mean mind, and lifts it up to arrogance ; that he whose merit achieves exalted countenance and protection, soon imagines the benefits reciprocal, and

that ability is an universal magnet, which if the hand of one man should be shut, will infallibly open the generosity of another. Perhaps where there is pecuniary prudence this may be so ; but when there is not, we know that beggary and wretchedness are the sure attendants of the unhappy self-deceiver.

JONES, who had in early life sacrificed to vanity, grew sturdy and unpropitiating, and thus, offering no more the food expected by the GREAT, the food he expected from them was with-held of course. He died, April 1770, in a garret belonging to the master of Bedford Coffee-house, upon whose charity he had some time linger'd out a miserable existence.

He left an unfinished play called *The Cave of Idra*—which, Hiffernan afterwards completed, and brought out under the title of *The Heroine of the Cave*.

THE
EARL OF ESSEX.

THE fate of this unhappy man, so compounded of fiery and ungovernable qualities, has often exercised the dramatic pen. The personages and events of the reign of our ELIZABETH are all so tinged with romantic fiction and romantic passion, the ardour of enthusiastic gallantry seems to have so oddly mingled with the cold trickeries of state policy—the heart and the lips were so unaccountably at variance, that we are not surprised to find an adoring lover turn out a haughty traitor, and a doting queen become a keen and an avenging tyrant.

Such characters, nevertheless, afford the finest subjects for the dramatic muse, which delights in the surprises of sudden transition, and enjoys the tempest of wild and ungovernable emotions.

It is a peculiar circumstance, that these bold and original features of character among us, should have caught the consideration of no masterly writer. JEPHSON and CUMBERLAND, and the superior talents of WALPOLE, have chosen to invent a fable, or build upon an incident taken from a foreign land.

The present play has certainly many poetical beauties, but they are in truth subordinate ingredients in

tragedy. The forcible colouring of strong passion, and the exhibition of the fluctuations of the human mind ; the discriminative peculiarities of character ; these are the grand objects of the tragic muse, and the story before us is as susceptible of their exertion as any we know of.

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TO
MR. HENRY JONES,

ON HIS TRAGEDY OF
THE EARL OF ESSEX.

As antient heroes are renown'd in song,
For rescuing virtue from th' oppressor's wrong,
So shall thy fame, who snatch'd this well-wrought
tale
From dullness' gloomy pow'r, o'er time prevail.

Long had these scenes, wound up with dext'rous
art,

In spite of reason, gain'd upon the heart;
Thaw'd ev'ry frozen fountain of the eye,
We wept, 'till even Sorrow's self was dry;
Yet judgment scorn'd what passion had approv'd,
And the head wonder'd how the heart was mov'd.
But, with a fate revers'd, thy work shall boast,
That soundest judgments shall admire it most.
Cloath'd in the easy grandeur of thy lines,
The story brightens, as the diction shines.
Renew'd with vigour as in age 'tis grown,
The wond'ring scene sees beauties not its own.

Thus, worn with years, in Afric's sultry vales,
The crested snake shifts off his tarnish'd scales;
Assumes fresh beauties, brighter than the old,
Of changing colours intermix'd with gold :

Reburnish'd, basks beneath the scorching ray,
 Shines with new glories in the face of day,
 Darts fiercer lightning from his brandish'd tongue,
 Rolls more sublime, and seems, at least, more young.

No more shall noise, and wild bombastic rage,
 Usurp th' applauding thunder of the stage;
 Fustian no more shall pass for true sublime,
 Nor nonsense musically float in rhyme;
 Nor, in a worse extreme, shall creeping prose,
 For nature and simplicity, impose:
 By thee reform'd, each vicious taste shall fail,
 And critic Justice hold aloft her scale.

Whence beams this dazzling lustre on thy mind?
 Whence this vast fund of knowledge in mankind,
 Unletter'd genius? Whence hast thou been taught,
 This dignity of stile, this majesty of thought;
 This rapid fire, by cool correctness rul'd,
 And every learned elegance, unschool'd?
 Say, hath great Shakspeare's transmigrated shade
 Inform'd thy mass, or lent thee friendly aid?
 To him, blest'd bard, untaught, 'twas also giv'n,
 T' ascend, on native wings, invention's brightest
 Heaven*,

Assuming Phœbus' port; and in his train,
 The muses all, like handmaids, not in vain,
 Crouch for employment. —
 The passions too, subservient to his will,
 Attentive wait on his superior skill;

* Alluding to the prologue to Henry V.

At the command of his enchanting art,
Unlock the bursting flood-gates of the heart,
And in the rapid, head-long stream bear down
The vanquish'd soul, and make it all his own.

Happy the clime, distinguish'd be the age,
When genius shoots spontaneous for the stage ;
Not too luxuriant, nor too trimly neat,
But, in loose wildness, negligently great.
O may the gen'rous plant, so wond'rous rare,
Ne'er want the tender hand of soft'ring care ;
But, like Apollo's fav'rite tree, be seen,
For ever flourishing, for ever green.

M'NAMARA MORGAN.

PROLOGUE.

*OUR desp'rate bard a bold excursion tries,
Tho' danger damp'd his wings, he dar'd to rise :
From hope, high rais'd, all glorious actions spring ;
'Tis hence that heroes conquer, poets sing.
Even he may feel the soul-exalting fire,
Fame prompts the humblest bosom to aspire.*

*Without a guide this rash attempt he made,
Without a clue from art, or learning's aid.
He takes a theme where tend'rest passions glow,
A theme, your grandsires felt with pleasing woe.
Essex' sad tale he strives to clothe anew,
And hopes to place it in a stronger view.*

*Poets, like painters, may, by equal law,
The labour'd piece from different masters draw ;
Perhaps improve the plan, add fire and grace,
And strike th' impassion'd soul through all the face,
How far our author has secur'd a claim
To this exalted palm, this wish'd-for fame,
Your generous sentiments will soon declare :
Humanity is ever prone to spare.
'Twere baseness then your candour to distrust ;
A British audience, will at least, be just.*

*A flattering truth he fearful must confess,
His sanguine friends made promise of success ;
But that, he fears, their ardent wishes wrought,
Since partial favour seldom sees a fault.
Then bear, like patient friends, this first essay,
His next shall thank you in a nobler way.*

PROLOGUE.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

The Earl of ESSEX	-	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
Earl of SOUTHAMPTON	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
Lord BURLEIGH	-	-	-	-	Mr. Harley.
Sir WALTER RALEIGH	-	-	-	-	Mr. Macready.
Lieutenant of the Tower	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
Officer	-	-	-	-	Mr. Evatt.

Women.

Queen ELIZABETH	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
Countess of RUTLAND	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Esten.
Countess of NOTTINGHAM	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Bernard.

Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.

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THE
EARL OF ESSEX.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*An Antechamber in the Palace. Enter BURLEIGH and
RALEIGH.*

Burleigh.

THE bill, at length, has pass'd opposing numbers,
Whilst crowds seditious clamour'd round the senate,
And headlong faction urg'd its force within.

Ral. It has, my lord.—The wish'd-for day is
come,

When this proud idol of the people's hearts
Shall now no more be worshipp'd.—*Essex falls.*
My lord, the minute's near that shall unravel
The mystic schemes of this aspiring man.
Now fortune, with officious hand, invites us
To her, and opens wide the gates of greatness,

The way to power. My heart exults ; I see,
I see, my lord, our utmost wish accomplish'd !
I see great Cecil shine without a rival,
And England blefs him as her guardian faint.
Such potent instruments I have prepar'd,
As shall, with speed, o'erturn this hated man,
And dash him down, by proof invincible.

Bur. His day of glory now is set in night,
And all my anxious hopes, at last, are crown'd.
Those proofs against him, Raleigh—

Ral. All arrived.

Bur. Arrived ! how ? when ?

Ral. This very hour, my lord :
Nay more, a person comes, of high distinction,
To prove some secret treaties made by Essex,
With Scotland's monarch, and the proud Tyrone.

Bur. How say'st ? to prove 'em ?

Ral. Ay, my lord, and back'd
With circumstances of a stronger nature.
It now appears, his secretary Cuff,
With Blunt and Lee, were deep concern'd in this
Destructive scheme, contriv'd to raise this lord,
And ruin Cecil. O, it is a subtle,
A deep-laid mischief, by the earl contriv'd,
In hour malignant, to o'erturn the state,
And (horror to conceive !) dethrone the queen.

Bur. These gladsome tidings fly beyond my hopes !
The queen will listen now, will now believe,
And trust the counsel of her faithful Burleigh.
“ Let this most lucky circumstance be kept
“ A secret still from public observation.—”

Dispose 'em well, till kind occasion calls
Their office forth, lest prying craft mean while
May tamper with their thoughts, and change their
minds :

Let them, like batteries conceal'd, appear
At once, both to surprise and to destroy.

Ral. This sudden shock, my lord, this weighty
stroke,

Must press him headlong down to deep destruction :
Indignant fate marks out this dreaded man,
And fortune now has left him.

Bur. Thank the changeling ;
His servile faction soon will stand aghast,
And sink, at distance, from his threat'ning fall.

Ral. His headstrong friend, the bold Southampton
too,

Now finds his rash endeavours all defeated ;
And storms at thee and the impeaching commons.

Bur. Let him rave on, and rage.—The lion in
The toils entangled, wastes his strength, and roars
In vain ; his efforts but amuse me now.—

“ *Ral.* What triumphs in my soul shall reign, to
see

“ This sanguine and o'erbearing man brought down.

“ Beneath my envy ; nay, below my scorn.

“ How young ambition swells my rising hopes !

“ 'Tis Heaven, O Cecil, calls thro' England's
voice,

“ And justice, bending from above, invites us.”

Enter Gentleman.

Gent. My lord, the lady Nottingham desires,
With much impatience, to attend your lordship.

Bur. What may the purport of her bus'ness be ?
Her tender wishes are to Essex ty'd
In love's soft fetters and endearing bands :

" For him, each melting thought awakes desire,

" And all her soul is lavish'd on that lord,—

" This unexpected visit much surprises me !

" What can it mean ? She would not come to pry

" And pick out tales for Essex' ear !—Why let
her ;

" I'm arm'd secure against her arts and cunning.

" Besides, her errand comes too late ; for now

" Her minion's doom'd to fall."—Conduct her in.

[*Exit Gent.*

And you, my Raleigh, watch Southampton's steps ;
With care observe each movement of his friends ;

That no advantage on that side be lost. [*Exit Ral.*

" Southampton's Essex' second self ; he shares

" His headlong councils, and adopts his schemes ;

" His daring heart, and bold, ungovern'd tongue,

" Are both enlisted in the rash designs

" Of this proud lord, nor knows a will but his :

" A limb so fix'd must with the body fall."

Enter Lady NOTTINGHAM.

Not. Thrice hail to rescu'd England's guiding ge-
nius !

His country's guardian, and his queen's defence.
Great Burleigh, thou whose patriot bosom beats
With Albion's glory and Eliza's fame;
Who shield'dst her person, and support'dst her throne;
For thee, what fervent thanks, what offer'd vows,
Do prostrate millions pay!

Bur. Bright excellence,
This fair applause too highly over-rates,
Too much extols, the low deserts of Cecil.

Not. What praises are too high for patriot-worth;
Or what applause exceeds the price of virtue?
My lord, conviction has at last subdu'd me,
And I am honour's proselyte:—too long
My erring heart pursued the ways of faction;
I own myself t' have been your bitt'rest foe,
And join'd with Essex in each foul attempt
To blast your honour, and traduce your fame.

Bur. Tho' ne'er my wishing heart could call you
friend,

Yet honour and esteem I always bore you;
And never meant, but with respect to serve you.

" It grieves me, madam, to have thus offended,

" Where most my wishes labour'd to oblige.

" *Not.* I know your honour and your virtues
well;

" Your public plans, design'd for England's good,

" And all your private merit's weight. But, Oh,

" How blind is reason in the maze of passion!

" I sought your ruin, labour'd for your fall.

" But, if repentance may atone for guilt,

" Or self-reproach for sharpest penance pass,

" No mortal breast e'er felt more woe than mine,

" And Burleigh now may rank me for his friend.

" *Bur.* That such a worth of soul should be
abus'd !

" Could I accuse my heart but of a thought

" To do you wrong ; if any purpose ever

" Against your welfare in my soul arise,

" That look'd with malice on your shining merit,

" Your matchless beauty, or your brighter virtues,

" Then let me live despis'd, a proverb made

" To ev'ry passing slave ; nay more, the scorn

" And trampled footstool of the man I hate."

Not. It is enough, my lord, I know it well,

And feel rekindling virtue warm my breast ;

Honour and gratitude their force resume

Within my heart, and every wish is yours.

O Cecil, Cecil, what a foe hast thou,

A deadly foe, whilst hated Essex lives !

Bur. I know it well, but can assign no cause.

Not. Ambition's restless hand has wound his
thoughts

Too high for England's welfare ; nay, the queen

Scarce sits in safety on her throne, while he,

Th' audacious Essex, freely treads at large,

And breathes the common air. Ambition is

The only god he serves, to whom he'd sacrifice

His honour, country, friends, and every tie

Of truth, and bond of nature ; nay, his love.

Bur. " I find this bus'ness work as I would have
it. [*Aside.*"]

The man that in his public duty fails,

On private virtue will disdainful tread,

As steps to raise him to some higher purpose :
In vain each softer wish would plead with him,
No tender movement in his soul prevails,
And mighty love, who rules all nature else,
Must follow here in proud ambition's train.

Not. Pronounce it not, my soul abhors the sound,
Like death. — Oh, Cecil, will you kindly lend
Some pity to a wretch like me ?

Bur. Command,

Madam ; my power and will are yours. “ I feel
“ Your wrongs, I feel the base returns you've met
“ From this ungrateful and disloyal man,
“ Tho' oft your goodness screen'd him from re-
proof.

“ Believe me worthy to partake your grievance,
“ Accept my service, and employ my power.”

Not. Will Cecil's friendly ear vouchsafe to bend
Its great attention to a woman's wrongs,
Whose pride and shame, resentment and despair,
Rise up in raging anarchy at once,
To tear with ceaseless pangs my tortur'd soul ?
Words are unequal to the woes I feel,
And language lessens what my heart endures.
Passion repuls'd with scorn, and proud disdain,
Recoils indignant on my shrinking soul,
Beats back my vital springs, and crushes life.

Bur. Madam, your wrongs, I must confess, are
great ;

Yet still, I fear, you know not half his falsehood.

“ Who, that had eyes to look on beauty ; who,
“ That had a heart to feel that beauty's power ;”

Who, but the false, perfidious Essex, could
Prefer to Nottingham a Rutland's charms?
Start not—By Heav'n, I tell you nought but truth,
What I can prove, past doubt; that he receiv'd
The lady Rutland's hand, in sacred wedlock,
The very night before his setting out
For Ireland.

Not. Oh, may quick destruction seize 'em!
May furies blast, and hell destroy their peace!
May all their nights——

Bur. I pray, have patience, madam,
Restrain awhile your rage; curses are vain,
But there's a surer method to destroy him;
And if you'll join with me, 'tis done: he falls.

Not. Ha! say'st thou, Burleigh! Speak, my ge-
nius, speak;
Be quick as vengeance' self to tell me how.

Bur. You must have heard the commons have im-
peach'd him,

And we have proofs sufficient for his ruin.
But the queen—you know how fair he stands
In her esteem; and Rutland too, his wife,
Hath full possession of the royal ear.
What then avail impeachments, or the law's
Severest condemnation, while the queen
May snatch him from the uplifted hand of justice?
Here, then, my Nottingham, begins thy task:
Try ev'ry art t' incense the queen against him,
Then step between her and the lady Rutland,
“Let not her fondness find the least access
“To the queen's heart to counterwork our pur-
pose.”

Observe Southampton too, with jealous eye;
Prevent, as much as possible, his suit:
For well I know he will not fail to try
His eloquence on the behalf of Essex.

Not. It shall be done; his doom is fix'd; he dies.
Oh, 'twas a precious thought! I never knew
Such heart-felt satisfaction! Essex dies,
And Rutland, in her turn, shall learn to weep.
The time is precious; I'll about it straight.
Come, vengeance, come, assist me now to breathe
Thy venom'd spirit in the royal ear. [*Exit Not.*]

Bur. There spoke the very genius of the sex.
A disappointed woman sets no bounds
To her revenge. Her temper's form'd to serve me.

Enter RALEIGH.

Ral. The lord Southampton, with ungovern'd
rage,
Resents aloud his disappointed measures.
I met him in the outward court; he seeks
In haste your lordship, and, forgetting forms,
Pursues me hither, and demands to see you.

Bur. Raleigh, 'tis well—Withdraw—Attend the
queen.
Leave me to deal with this o'erbearing man.

[*Exit Raleigh.*]

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

South. Where is the man, whom virtue calls her
friend?

I give you joy, my lord!—Your quenchless fury
At length prevails,—and now your malice triumphs.
You've hunted honour to the toil of faction,
And view his struggles with malicious joy.

Bur. What means my lord?

South. Oh, fraud! shall valiant Essex
Be made a sacrifice to your ambition!
Oh, it smells foul indeed, of rankest malice,
And the vile statesman's craft. You dare not sure
Thus bid defiance to each shew of worth,
Each claim of honour: dare not injure thus
Your suffering country in her bravest son!

Bur. But why should stern reproach her angry
brow

Let fall on me? Am I alone the cause
That gives this working humour strength? Do I
Instruct the public voice to warp his actions?
Justice, untaught, shall poise th' impartial scales,
And every curious eye may mark the beam.

South. The specious shield, which private malice
bears,

Is ever blazon'd with some public good;
Behind that artful fence, sculk low, conceal'd
The bloody purpose, and the poison'd shaft;
Ambition there, and envy nestle close;
From whence they take their fatal aim unseen;
And honest merit is the destin'd mark.

Bur. "Your warm distemper'd zeal puts rashly
by

"The cool directing hand of wholesome reason.

"No imputation foul shall rest on me;

"My honest purposes defy aloud

“ The slander-spreading tongue of busy faction,
“ To cast its venom on my fair report,
“ Or tell posterity, thus Cecil did.”

My country's welfare, and my queen's command,
Have ever been my guiding stars through life,
My sure direction still.—To these I now
Appeal ;—from these, no doubt, this lord's misconduct

Hath widely stray'd ; and reason, not reviling,
Must now befriend his cause.

South. How ill had Providence
Dispos'd the suffering world's oppress'd affairs,
Had sacred right's eternal rule been left
To crafty politicians' partial sway !
Then power and pride would stretch th' enormous
grasp,

And call their arbitrary portion, justice :
Ambition's arm, by av'rice urg'd, would pluck
The core of honesty from virtue's heart,
And plant deceit and rancour in its stead :
Falsehood would trample then on truth and honour,
And envy poison sweet benevolence.

Oh, 'tis a goodly group of attributes,
And well befits some statesman's righteous rule !
Out, out upon such base and bloody doings !
The term of being is not worth the sin ;
No human bosom can indure its dart.
Then put this cruel purpose from thee far,
Nor let the blood of Essex overwhelm thy soul.

Bur. 'Tis well, my lord ! your words no comment
need ;

"No doubt, they've well explain'd your honest meaning ;

" 'Tis clear and full.—To parts, like yours, discretion

"Would be a clog, and caution but incumbrance."

Yet mark me well, my lord, the clinging ivy
With th' oak may rise, but with it too must fall.

South. Thy empty threats, ambitious man, hurt:
not

The breast of truth. Fair innocence, and faith,
Those strangers to thy practis'd heart, shall shield
My honour, and preserve my friend.—In vain,
Thy malice, with unequal arm, shall strive
To tear the applauded wreath from Essex' brow ;
His honest laurel, held aloft by fame,

"Above thy blasting reach, shall safely flourish,"
Shall bloom immortal to the latest times ;
Whilst thou, amidst thy tangling snares involv'd,
Shalt sink confounded, and unpitied fall.

Bur. Rail on, proud lord, and give thy choler
vent :

It wastes itself in vain ; the queen shall judge
Between us in this warm debate. To her
I now repair ; and in her royal presence
You may approve your innocence and faith.
Perhaps you'll meet me there.—Till then, farewell.

[*Exit.*

South. Confusion wait thy steps, thou cruel monster !

My noble and illustrious friend betray'd,
By crafty faction and tyrannic power,

His sinking trophies, and his falling fame,
Oppress my very soul. I'll to the queen,
Lay all their envy open to her view,
Confront their malice, and preserve my friend. [*Exit.*]

*The Queen discover'd, sitting on her throne. RALEIGH,
Lords and Attendants.*

Qu. Without consulting me! presumptuous man!
Who governs here?—What! am not I your queen?
You dar'd not, were he present, take this step.

Ral. Dread sovereign, your ever faithful commons

Have, in their gratitude and love for you,
Preferr'd this salutary bill against him.

Enter BURLEIGH.

Qu. You, my lord Burleigh, must have known of this.

The commons here impeach the Earl of Essex
Of practising against the state and me.
Methinks I might be trusted with the secret.
Speak, for I know it well, 'twas thy contrivance.
Ha! was it not? You dare not say it was not.

Bur. I own my judgment did concur with theirs.
His crimes, I fear, will justify the charge,
And vindicate their loyalty and mine.

Qu. Ha! tell not me your smooth deceitful story!
I know your projects, and your close cabals.

You'd turn my favour into party feuds,
And use my sceptre as the rod of faction :
But Henry's daughter claims a nobler soul.
I'll nurse no party, but will reign o'er all,
And my sole rule shall be to bless my people :
Who serves them best has still my highest favour :
This Essex ever did.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

Behold, Southampton,
What a base portrait's here ! The faithful Essex
Here drawn at large associating with rebels,
To spoil his country and dethrone his queen.

South. It is not like.—By Heav'n the hand of
envy

Drew these false lines, distorted far from truth
And honour, and unlike my noble friend
As light to shade, or hell to highest heav'n.
Then suffer not, thou best of queens, this lord,
This valiant lord, to fall a sacrifice
To treachery and base designs ; who now
Engages death in all his horrid shapes,
Amidst a hardy race, inur'd to danger ;
But let him face to face, this charge encounter,
And every falsehood, like his foes, shall fly.

Qu. To me you seem to recommend strict justice,

In all her pomp of power. But are you sure
No subtle vice conceal'd assumes her garb ?
Take heed, that malice does not wear the mask,

Nor envy deck her in the borrow'd guise.

"Rancour has often darken'd reason's eye,

"And judgment winks, when passion holds the
scale."

Impeach the very man to whom I owe

My brightest rays of glory! Look to it, lords,

Take care, be cautious on what ground you tread;

Let honest means alone secure your footing.

Raleigh and you withdraw, and wait our leisure.

[*Exeunt Raleigh and South.*]

Lord Burleigh, stay; we must with you have farther

Conference.—I see this base contrivance plain.

Your jealousy and pride, your envy of

His shining merit, brought this bill to light.

But mark me, as you prize our high regard

And favour, I command you to suppress it;

Let not our name and power be embarrass'd

In your perplexing schemes. 'Twas you began,

And therefore you must end it.

Bur. I obey.

Yet humbly would intreat you to consider

How new, unpopular, this step must be,

To stand between your parliament's enquiry

And this offending lord.—We have such proofs—

Qu. Reserve your proofs to a more proper season,

And let them then appear. But once again

We charge you, on your duty and allegiance,

To stop this vile proceeding; and to wait

Till Essex can defend himself in person.

If then your accusations are of force,

The laws, and my consent, no doubt, are open.

He has my strict command, with menace mix'd,
To end effectually this hated war,
Ere he presume to quit the Irish coast.

Bur. Madam, my duty now compels me to—

Qu. No more ! see that my orders be obey'd.

[*Exit Bur.*]

Essex a traitor !—it can never be—
His grateful and his honest soul disdains it.—
I know him hot, ambitious, rash, impatient ;
But then he's firmly anchor'd in his duty :
Tho' stormy passions toss him to and fro.
Can he prove false ? so high advanc'd, so honour'd,
So near my favour—and—I fear so near
My heart !—Impossible.—This Burleigh hates him,
And, his rival, therefore would destroy him ;
But he shall find his narrow schemes defeated.
In vain their fraudulent efforts shall combine
To shake my settled soul, my firm design ;
Resolv'd to lift bright virtue's palm on high,
Support her grandeur, and her foes defy. [Exit.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter BURLEIGH and RALEIGH.

Burleigh.

Essex arriv'd ! Confusion to my hopes !
His presence will destroy me with the queen.

I much suspect he had some private notice,

Perhaps, a punctual order, to return.

He lurks too near her heart.—What's to be done?

“ Prepare the witnesses with speed ; apprize

“ The lady Nottingham.—Southampton's pride,

“ And Rutland's too, will lift the crest again.

“ But fly, my Raleigh, fend me Nottingham,

“ [Exit Raleigh.

“ We must alarm the queen with new commotions

“ In many parts of her dominions rais'd :

“ All this, and more, must now be pass'd for truth.

“ This sudden blow has struck me to the soul ;

“ 'Tis gone too far, he dies—proud Essex now,

“ Or Cecil falls.” Now is th' important crisis—

Keep up thy usual strength ; my better genius,

Direct my steps to crush my mortal foe.

Enter QUEEN and RALEIGH.

Qu. It cannot be ! Return'd without my leave !
Against my strict command !—Impossible !

Ral. Madam, the earl is now at court, and begs
An audience of your majesty.

Qu. Amazing !
What ! break his trust ! desert his high command,
Forfake his post, and disobey his queen !
'Tis false—invented all.—You wish it so.

Bur. Madam, I wish some other rumours false :
Reports, I fear, of great concern to you.

Qu. What rumours ? what reports ? your frown
would much
Denote : your preface seems important.—Speak.

Bur. Some new commotions are of late sprung up
In Ireland, where the west is all in arms,
And moves with hasty march to join Tyrone,
And all his northern clans. A dreadful power !
Nay more, we have advices from the borders
Of sudden risings, near the banks of Tweed !
'Tis thought, to favour an attempt from Scotland.
Mean while, Tyrone embarks six thousand men
To land at Milford, and to march where Essex
Shall join them with his friends.

Qu. In league with James !
And plotting with Tyrone ! It cannot be.
His very pride disdains such perfidy.
But is not Essex here without my leave !
Against my strict command ! that, that's rebellion.
The rest, if true, or false, it matters not.
What's to be done ?—admit him to my presence ?
No, no—my dignity, my pride forbid it.
Ungrateful man, approach me not ; rise, rise,
Resentment, and support my soul ! Disdain,
Do thou assist me—Yes, it shall be so.

Bur. I see she muses deep ; her mind works up-
wards,
And paints its struggling efforts in her face.
Tyrone's invasion wakes her fear and anger,
And all her soul is one continued storm.

Qu. For once my pride shall stoop ; and I will
see
This rash, audacious, this once favour'd man ;
But treat him as his daring crimes deserve.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

South. [*Kneeling.*] Permit me, madam, to approach
you thus ;

Thus lowly to present the humble suit
Of the much injur'd, faithful Earl of Essex,
Who dares not, unpermitted, meet your presence.
He begs, most gracious queen, to fall before
Your royal feet, to clear him to his sovereign,
Whom, next to Heav'n, he wishes most to please.
Let faction load him with her labouring hand,
His innocence shall rise against the weight,
If but his gracious mistress deign to smile.

Qu. Let him appear.

[*Exit South.*]

Now to thy trying task,
My soul ! Put forth, exert thy utmost strength,
Nor let an injur'd queen be tame.—Lie still,
My heart, I cannot listen to thee now.

Enter ESSEX and SOUTHAMPTON.

Essex. Forgive, thou injur'd majesty, thou best
Of queens, this seeming disobedience. See,
I bend submissive in your royal presence,
With soul as penitent, as if before
Th' all-searching eye of Heav'n. But, oh, that
frown !
My queen's resentment wounds my inmost spirit,
Strikes me like death, and pierces through my
heart.

Qu. You have obey'd, my lord ! you've serv'd me well !

My deadly foes are quell'd ! and you come home
A conqueror ! your country bids you welcome !
And I, your queen, applaud !——Triumphant
man !

What ! is it thus that Essex gains his laurels ?
What ! is it thus you've borne my high commission ?
How durst you disregard your trusted duty,
Desert your province, and betray your queen ?

Essex. I came to clear my injur'd name from guilt,
Imputed guilt, and slanderous accusations.
My shame was wafted in each passing gale,
Each swelling tide came loaded with my wrongs ;
And echo sounded forth, from faction's voice,
The traitor Essex.—Was't not hard, my queen,
That while I stood in danger's dreadful front,
Encountering death in every shape of terror,
And bleeding for my country ?——Was't not hard,
My mortal enemies at home, like cowards,
Shou'd in my absence basely blast my fame ?

Qu. It is the godlike attribute of kings
To raise the virtuous and protect the brave.
I was the guardian of your reputation,
What malice, or what faction, then could reach
you ?

My honour was expos'd, engag'd for yours :
But you found reason to dislike my care,
And to yourself assum'd the wrested office.

Essex. If aught disloyal in this bosom dwells,
If aught of treason lodges in this heart,
May I to guilt and lasting shame be wedded,

The sport of faction, and the mark of scorn,
The world's derision, and my queen's abhorrence,
Stand forth the villain, whose invenom'd tongue
Would taint my honour and traduce my name,
Or stamp my conduct with a rebel's brand !
Lives there a monster in the haunts of men,
Dares tear my trophies from their pillar'd base,
Eclipse my glory, and disgrace my deeds ?

Qu. This ardent language, and this glow of soul,
Were nobly graceful in a better cause ;
Where virtue warrants, and where truth inspires :
But injur'd truth, with brow invincible,
Frowns stern reproof upon the false assertion,
And contradicts it with the force of facts.
From me you have appeal'd, ungrateful man ;
The laws, not I, must listen to your plea.
Go, stand the test severe, abide the trial,
And mourn, too late, the bounty you abus'd.

[*Exeunt* Queen, Southampton, &c.]

Essex. Is this the just requital, then, of all
My patriot-toils and oft-encounter'd perils,
Amidst th' inclemencies of camps and climes ?
Then be it so.——Unmov'd and dauntless, let
me

This shock of adverse fortune firmly stand.
But yet, methinks, 'tis somewhat sudden too !
My greatness, now depriv'd of each support,
Which bore so long its envy'd weight aloft,
Must quick to ruin fall, and crush my hopes.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

South. Alas, my lord ! the queen's displeasure kindles

With warmth increasing ; whilst Lord Burleigh labours

T' inflame her wrath, and make it still burn fiercer.

Essex. I scorn the blaze of courts, the pomp of kings ;

I give them to the winds, and lighter vanity ;

Too long they've robb'd me of substantial blifs,

Of solid happiness and true enjoyments.

But lead me to my mourning love ; alas !

She sinks beneath oppressing ills ; she fades,

She dies for my afflicting pangs, and seeks

Me, forrowing, in the walks of woe.—Distracti-
on !

Oh, lead me to her, to my soul's desire.

South. Let caution guide you in this dangerous
step.

Consider well, my lord, the consequence—

For should the queen (forbid it Heaven !) discover

Your private loves, your plighted hands, no power

On earth could step between you and destruction.

“ Lock up this secret from the prying world.”

Enter BURLEIGH.

Bur. My lord of Essex, 'tis the queen's com-
mand,

That you forthwith resign your staff of office ;

And further, she confines you to your palace.

Essex. Welcome, my fate. Let fortune do her utmost ;

I know the worst, and will confront her malice,
And bravely bear the unexpected blow.

Bur. The queen, my lord, demands your quick compliance.

Essex. Go, then, thou gladsome messenger of ill,
And, joyful, feast thy fierce rapacious soul
With Essex' sudden and accomplish'd fall.

The trampled corse of all his envy'd greatness,
Lies prostrate now beneath thy savage feet ;
But still th' exalted spirit mounts above thee.

Go, tell the queen thy own detested story :
Full in her sight disclose the snaky labyrinths
And lurking snares you plant in virtue's path,
To catch integrity's unguarded step.

Bur. How ill repaid are public toils and cares,
“ Where active honesty, with station join'd,
“ Incurs but calumny and foul reproach !”
Your country has impeach'd, your queen accus'd
you ;

To these address your best defence, and clear
Your question'd conduct from disloyal guilt.
What answer to the queen shall I return ?

Essex. My staff of office I from her receiv'd,
And will to her, and her alone, resign it.

Bur. This bold refusal will incense the queen.
This arrogance will make your guilt the stronger.

[*Exit.*
South. Sustain, my noble friend, thy wonted greatness ;

Collect thy fortitude, and summon all
 Thy soul, to bear with strength this crushing weight,
 Which falls severe upon thee ; whilst my friendship
 Shall lend a helping hand, and share the burthen.
 I'll hence with speed, and to the queen repair,
 And all the power of warmest words employ,
 To gain you yet one audience more, and bring
 Her majesty to milder thoughts. Farewell. [*Exit.*]

Essex. As newly wak'd from all my dreams of glory,

Those gilded visions of deceitful joys,
 I stand confounded at the unlook'd-for change,
 And scarcely feel this thunder-bolt of fate.
 The painted clouds, which bore my hopes aloft,
 Alas, are now vanish'd to yielding air,
 And I am fall'n indeed ! ———

How weak is reason, when affection pleads !
 How hard to turn the fond, deluded heart
 From flatt'ring toys, which sooth'd its vanity !
 The laurell'd trophy, and the loud applause,
 The victor's triumph, and the people's gaze ;
 The high-hung banner, and recording gold,
 Subdue me still, still cling around my heart,
 And pull my reason down.

Enter RUTLAND.

Rut. Oh, let me fly
 To clasp, embrace, the lord of my desires,
 My soul's delight, my utmost joy, my husband !
 I feel once more his panting bosom beat ;

Once more I hold him in my eager arms,
Behold his face, and lose my soul in rapture.

Essex. Transporting bliss ! my richest, dearest treasure !

My mourning turtle, my long absent peace,
Oh, come yet nearer, nearer to my heart !
My raptur'd soul springs forward to receive thee :
Thou Heav'n on earth, thou balm of all my woe !

Rut. O, shall I credit then each ravish'd sense ;
Has pitying Heav'n consented to my prayer ?
It has, it has ; my Essex is return'd !
But language poorly speaks the joys I feel ;
Let passion paint, and looks express my soul.

Essex. With thee, my sweetest comfort, I'll retire
From splendid palaces, and glitt'ring throngs,
To live embosom'd in the shades of joy,
Where sweet content extends her friendly arms,
And gives encreasing love a lasting welcome,
With thee, I'll timely fly from proud oppression,
Forget our sorrows, and be bless'd for ever.

Rut. O, let us hence, beyond the reach of power ;
Where fortune's hand shall never part us more.
In this calm state of innocence and joy,
I'll press thee to my throbbing bosom close.
Ambition's voice shall call in vain ; the world,
The thankless world, shall never claim thee more,
And all thy business shall be love and me.

Essex. The queen, incens'd at my return, abandons me

To Cecil's malice, and the rage of faction.
 I'm now no more the fav'rite child of fortune :
 My enemies have caught me in the toil,
 And life has nothing worth my wish, but thee.

Rut. Delusive dream of fancied happiness !
 And has my fatal fondness then destroy'd thee ?
 Oh, have I hur'd thee to the deadly snare
 Thy cruel foes have laid ? " Oh, have I put
 " Thy life in peril ? My officious tears
 " Would needs inform thee of their wicked
 schemes."

I dreaded Cecil's malice, and my heart,
 Longing to see thee, with impatience listen'd
 To its own alarms ; and prudence sunk beneath
 The force of love.

Essex. Forbear, my only comfort ;
 Oh, tell me not of danger, death, and Burleigh ;
 Let every star shed down its mortal bane
 On my unshelter'd head : whilst thus I fold
 Thee in my raptur'd arms ; I'll brave them all,
 Defy my fate, and meet its utmost rigour.

Rut. Alas, my lord ! consider where we are.
 Oh ! 'tis the queen's apartment ; death is here.
 " I came to thee through peril's ambush'd path,
 " And every danger risk'd for thy embrace."
 Each precious moment is by fate beset,
 And time stands trembling whilst we thus confer.

Essex. Then, let us hence from this detested
 place ;
 My rescu'd soul disdains the house of greatness,
 Where humble honesty can find no shelter.
 From hence we'll fly, where love and virtue call ;

Where happiness invites—that wish of all :
With sweet content enjoy each blissful hour,
Beyond the smiles of fraud, or frowns of power.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter BURLEIGH and NOTTINGHAM.

Nottingham.

My lord, I've fought you out with much impatience.

You've had an audience of the queen: what follow'd?

Bur. Soon as I told her Essex had refus'd
To yield his dignities, and staff of office,
“Against her high command, pronounc'd by me,”
She seem'd depriv'd of reason for a moment;
Her working mind betray'd contending passions,
Which, in her alter'd face, appear'd by turns.
She paus'd, like thunder in some kindling cloud,
The instant burst with dreadful fury forth:

“And has th' ungrateful wretch defy'd my mandate?”

“The proud, audacious traitor scorn'd my power?”

“He dares not, sure?—He dies—the villain dies.”

“Then, sudden, soften'd into milder sounds,

" And call'd him rash, unhappy, gallant Essex !
 " On me her fury fell ; my crafty plans
 " Against his reputation, fame, and life,
 " Had driven him to extremes—my malice did it—
 " My envy was his bane ; with all that passion
 " Or fury could suggest.—I begg'd to know
 " Her royal will concerning Essex ; urg'd
 " Again his insolence.—Amaz'd, awhile
 " She stood, and wist not what to do.—At length,
 " Collecting all her mind, these words she utter'd :"—

Let him to the Tow'r.—I instantly withdrew,
 But soon was countermanded, and desir'd
 To bring the Earl of Essex to her presence,
 I like it not, and much I fear, she'll stand
 Between this high offender and the laws.

Not. Is Essex then secur'd ?

Bur. Madam, he is ;]

And now comes guarded to the court.

Enter Gentleman.

Gent. Madam, the queen

Is in her closet, and desires to see you. [Exit.

Not. I attend her.

Bur. She wants, no doubt, to be advis'd by you.

Improve this fair occasion, urge it home ;

" She must be quick'ned by repeated strokes

" Of fresh indignities, by Essex offer'd

" T' her royal person, and prerogative.

" Be circumspect and cautious ! mark her well."

Not. I know her foible. Essex long has had
An interest in her heart, which nothing can
O'erturn, except his own ungovern'd spirit.
It is, indeed, the instrument by which
We work, and cannot fail, if rightly us'd.

Bur. Madam, the queen expects you instantly.
I must withdraw, and wait the earl's arrival.

[*Exeunt.*]

QUEEN discovered.

Qu. Ill-fated, wretched man ! perverse and obsti-
nate !

He counterworks my grace, and courts destruction.

He gives his deadly foes the dagger to

Destroy him, and defeats my friendly purpose,

Which would, by seeming to abandon, save him.

Nor will he keep the mask of prudence on

A moment's space.—What ! must I bear this scorn ?

No : let me all the monarch re-assume ;

Exert my power, and be myself again.—

Oh, ill-performing, disobedient heart !—

Why shrink'st thou, fearful, from thy own resolve ?

Enter NOTTINGHAM.

Thou com'st in time ; I'm much disturb'd, abus'd,

My Nottingham, and would complain to thee

Of insolence, neglect, and high contempt.

Essex presum'd to dictate laws within

My palace gates. How say'st thou, Nottingham ?

Not. Surely, my gracious queen, it cannot be!
His heat and passion never cou'd impel him
To take so bold a step, to such rash guilt:
Methinks his very honour should prevent it.

Qu. Thy open, honest mind untutor'd seems
In life's ungrateful and degenerate school;
Where stubborn vice in every form appears,
Mocking correction's ineffectual rod.

It is, indeed, an evil hard to bear;
This haughty man has wanton'd with my grace,
Abus'd my bounty, and despis'd my favours.

"That giving goodness should profusely flow

"T' enrich the surly glebe, where only thorns

"And noxious weeds will spring!"

Resentment, then, shall in her turn prevail;

To angry laws I'll give this victim up.

Not. His conduct has, I fear, been too unguard-
ed:

His hasty temper knows not where to stop.

Ambition is the spur of all his actions,

Which often drives him o'er his duty's limits;

(At least his enemies would have it so.)

But malice, madam, seldom judges right.

Qu. Oh, Nottingham! his pride is past enduring;

This insolent, audacious man forgets

His honour and allegiance;—and refus'd

To render up his staff of office, here,

Beneath my very eye.

Not. Presumptuous man!

Your faithful subjects will resent this pride,

This insolence, this treason to their queen;

They must, my gracious sovereign.—'Tis not safe
To shield him longer from their just resentment.
Then give him up to justice and the laws.

Qu. You seem well pleas'd to urge severity.—
Offended majesty but seldom wants
Such sharp advisers—Yet no attribute
So well befits the exalted seat supreme,
And power's disposing hand, as clemency.
Each crime must from its quality be judg'd ;
And pity there should interpose, where malice
Is not the aggressor. Hence ! I'll hear no more.

Not. Madam, my sentiments were well intended ;
Justice, not malice, mov'd my honest zeal.
My words were echoes of the public voice,
Which daily rises, with repeated cries
Of high complaint, against this haughty lord.
I pity, from my heart, his rash attempts,
And much esteem the man,

Qu. Go, Nottingham,
My mind's disturb'd, and send me Rutland hither.

[*Exit Not.*]

O, vain distinction of exalted state !
No rank ascends above the reach of care,
Nor dignity can shield a queen from woe.
Despotic nature's stronger sceptre rules,
And pain and passion in her right prevails,
Oh, the unpity'd lot, severe condition,
Of solitary, sad, dejected grandeur !
Alone condemn'd to bear th' unsocial throb
Of heart-felt anguish, and corroding grief ;
Depriv'd of what, within his homely shed,

The poorest peasant in affliction finds,
The kind, condoling comfort of a dear
Partaking friend.—

Enter Countess of Rutland.

Rutland, I want thy timely
Counsel. I'm importun'd, and urg'd to punish—
But justice, sometimes, has a cruel sound,
“Where mercy may with prudence meet, and both
“Agree to soften rigour.”—Essex has,
No doubt, provok'd my anger, and the laws;
His haughty conduct calls for sharp reproof,
And just correction. Yet I think him guiltless
Of studied treasons, or design'd rebellion.
Then, tell me, Rutland, what the world reports,
What censure says of his unruly deeds.

Rut. The world, with envy's eye, beholds his
merit :

Madam, 'tis malice all, and false report.
I know his noble heart, 'tis fill'd with honour:
No trait'rous taint has touch'd his generous soul;
His grateful mind still glows with pure affection;
And all his thoughts are loyalty and you.

Qu. I grant you, Rutland, all you say, and
think

The earl possess'd of many splendid virtues.
What pity 'tis, he should afford his foes
Such frequent, sad occasions to undo him!

Rut. What human heart can, unafflicted, bear
Such manly merit in distress : “Such worth

"Betray'd ; such valour in the toil," beset
By cruel foes, and faction's savage cry ?
My good, my gracious mistress, stretch betimes,
Your saving arm, and snatch him from destruction,
From deadly malice, treachery, and Cecil.
O, let him live, to clear his conduct up !
My gracious queen, he'll nobly earn your bounty,
And with his dearest blood deserve your mercy.

Qu. Her words betray a warm, unusual fervour ;
Mere friendship never could inspire this transport.

[*Aside.*]

I never doubted but the earl was brave ;
His life and valiant actions all declare it :
I think him honest too, but rash and headstrong.
I gladly would preserve him from his foes,
And therefore am resolv'd once more to see him.

Rut. Oh, 'tis a godlike thought, and Heav'n it-
self

Inspires it. Sure some angel moves your heart,
Your royal heart, to pity and forgiveness.
This gracious deed shall shine in future story,
And deck your annals with the brightest virtue ;
Posterity shall praise the princely act,
And ages yet to come record your goodness.

Qu. I'll hear no more—Must I then learn from
you

To know my province, and be taught to move,
As each designing mind directs ?—Leave me.

Rut. Her frowns are dreadful and her eye looks
terror.

I tremble for my Essex. Save him, Heav'n ! [*Exit.*]

Qu. Her warmth has touch'd me home. My jealous heart,
My fearful and suspicious soul's alarm'd.

Enter BURLEIGH, RALEIGH, and others.

Bur. The Earl of Essex waits your royal will.

Qu. Let him approach—And now, once more support
Thy dignity, my soul; nor yield thy greatness
To strong usurping passion—But he comes.

Enter ESSEX, SOUTHAMPTON, Guards.

Essex. Permitted thus to bend, with prostrate heart,
[*Kneels.*

Before your sacred majesty; I come,
With every grateful sense of royal favour
Deeply engrav'd within my conscious sou'.

Qu. I sent my orders for your staff of office.

Essex. Madam, my envy'd dignities and honours,
I first from your own royal hand receiv'd;
And therefore justly held it far beneath me
To yield my trophies, and exalted power,
So dearly purchas'd in the field of glory,
To hands unworthy. No, my gracious queen,
I meant to lay them at your royal feet;
Where life itself a willing victim falls,
If you command.

Qu. High swelling words, my lord, but ill supply

The place of deeds, and duty's just demand.
In danger's onset, and the day of trial,
Conviction still on acting worth attends ;
Whilst mere professions are by doubts encumber'd.

Essex. My deeds have oft declar'd, in danger's
front,

How far my duty and my valour lead me.

Allegiance still my thirst of glory fir'd,

And all my bravely gather'd, envy'd laurels,

Were purchas'd only to adorn my queen.

Qu. " Yet fact o'er fallacy must still prevail,

" And eloquence to simple truth give way."

Your guilty scorn of my entrusted power,

When with my mortal foes you tamely dally'd,

By hardy rebels brav'd, you poorly fought

A servile pause, and begg'd a shameful truce.

Should Essex thus, so meanly compromise,

And lose the harvest of a plenteous glory,

In idle treaties, and suspicious parly ?

Essex. Oh, deadly stroke ! My life's the destin'd
mark.

The poison'd shaft has drank my spirits deep.

Is't come to this ? Conspire with rebels ! Ha !

I've serv'd you, madam, with the utmost peril,

And ever glory'd in th' illustrious danger ;

Where famine fac'd me with her meagre mien,

And pestilence and death brought up her train.

I've fought your battles, in despite of nature,

Where seasons sicken'd, and the clime was fate.

My power to parly, or to fight, I had

From you ; the time and circumstance did call

Aloud for mutual treaty and condition ;

For that I stand a guarded felon here.—A traitor,
Hemm'd in by villains, and by slaves surrounded.

Qu. Shall added insolence, with crest audacious,
Her front uplift against the face of power.
Think not that injur'd majesty will bear
Such arrogance uncheck'd, or unchastis'd.

No public trust becomes the man, who treads,
With scornful steps, in honour's sacred path,
And stands at bold defiance with his duty.

Essex. Away with dignities and hated trust,
With flattering honours, and deceitful power!
Invert th' eternal rules of right and justice;
Let villains thrive, and out-cast virtue perish;
Let slaves be rais'd, and cowards have command.
Take, take your gaudy trifles back, those baits
Of vice, and virtue's bane.—'Tis clear, my queen,
My royal mistress, casts me off; nay, joins
With Cecil to destroy my life, and fame.

Qu. Presuming wretch! Audacious traitor!

Essex. Traitor!

Qu. Hence from my sight, ungrateful slave, and
learn
At distance to revere your queen.

Essex. Yes; let
Me fly beyond the limits of the world,
And nature's verge, from proud oppression far,
From malice, tyranny, from courts, from you.

Qu. Traitor! villain! [*Strikes him.*]

Essex. Confusion! what, a blow!
Restrain, good Heav'n! down, down, thou rebel pas-
sion,

And, judgment, take the reins. Madam, 'tis well—
Your soldier falls degraded.

His glory's tarnish'd, and his fame undone.

O, bounteous recompence from royal hands!

But you, ye implements, beware, beware,

What honour wrong'd, and honest wrath can act.

Qu. What would th' imperious traitor do? My
life

Beyond thy wretched purpose stands secure.

Go, learn at leisure what your deeds deserve,

And tremble at the vengeance you provoke.

[*Exeunt all but Essex and Southampton.*]

Essex. Disgrac'd and struck! Damnation! Death
were glorious.

Revenge! revenge!

South. Alas, my friend! what would
Thy rage attempt? Consider well the great
Advantage now your rash, ungovern'd temper
Affords your foes. The queen incens'd, will let
Their fury loose.—I dread the dire event.

Essex. Has honest pride no just resentment left?
Nor injur'd honour feeling? Not revenge!
High Heaven shall bear, and earth regret my wrongs.
Hot indignation burns within my soul.
I'll do some dreadful thing—I know not what;
Some deeds as horrid as the shame I feel,
Shall startle nature, and alarm the world.
Then hence, like lightning, let me furious fly,
To hurl destruction at my foes on high;
Pull down oppression from its tyrant seat,
Redeem my glory, or embrace my fate. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.*Enter QUEEN and NOTTINGHAM.**Queen.*

Not taken yet!

Not. No, madam; for the earl
Of Essex, leagu'd with desperate friends, made
strong

And obstinate resistance; till, at length,
O'erpower'd by numbers, and increasing force,
He fled for shelter to a small retreat,
A summer-house upon the Thames; resolv'd
To perish, rather than submit to power.

Qu. "O, wretch detested! O, unheard of treason!

"Conspire against my life, within my view!

"My reach! so near my very palace gates!

"Perfidious monster!—What can prudence do,

"Or human wisdom, more than judge from outside,

"And flattering likeness? Kings can see no farther.

"High Heav'n, alone, can read the heart, in all

"Its utmost frauds, and mystic characters."

Oh, where shall majesty bestow its favours,
Since Essex has a traitor prov'd to me,

Whose arm hath rais'd him up to power and greatness ;

Whose heart has shar'd in all his splendid triumphs,
And feels, ev'n now, his trait'rous deeds with pity ?
But hence with pity, and the woman's pangs :
Resentment governs, and the queen shall punish.

Enter BURLEIGH.

Bur. Illustrious queen, the traitors all are seiz'd.
Th' intelligence was true. Their black debates
Were held at Drury-house. The dire result
Was this : that Essex should alarm the citizens
To open mutiny, and bold rebellion.

" On this pernicious errand went the earl,
" Join'd by his desp'rate and seditious friends,"
Their purpose was to seize your royal palace,
And sacred person ; but your faithful people,
As by one mind inform'd, one zeal inspir'd,
Rose up at once, and with their virtue quell'd them.

Qu. Thanks to their honest, to their loyal hearts.
But say, were any person else concern'd,
Of high distinction, or of noted rank ?

Bur. Yes, madam, many more, seduc'd of late,
'Mong whom the bold Southampton foremost stands,
" Precipitate and rash ; whose pow'r tho' great,
" Lags far behind his will to do you hurt."
They're now our pris'ners, and are safe secur'd ;
But Essex, with Southampton, and the rest
Of greater note, I would not dare dispose of

Without your royal mandate ; and they now
Attend without, to know your final pleasure.

Qu. Is this the just return of all my care ;
My anxious toilsome days, and watchful nights ?
Have I sent forth a wish, that went not freighted
With all my people's good ? Or, have I life,
Or length of days desired, but for their sake ?
The public good is all my private care.

" Have I not ever thought the meanest subject,
" Oppress'd by power, was, in his just complaint,
" Above a king ? What British bosom has
" By foreign tyranny been griev'd, whose wrongs
" I have not felt as mine, as mine redress'd ?
" Or have I, justly, made a single man
" My foe ?" Then could I think this grateful isle
Contain'd one traitor's heart ? But, least of all,
That Essex' breast should lodge it ? Call the monster,
And let me meet this rebel face to face.

Do you withdraw, and wait within our call.

[Exeunt BURLEIGH, &c.]

Enter ESSEX.

You see we dare abide your dang'rous presence,
Tho' treason sits within your heart enthron'd,
And on that brow rebellion lours, where once
Such boasted loyalty was said to flourish.
How low the traitor can degrade the soldier !
Guilt glares in conscious dye upon thy cheek,
And inward horror trembles in thine eye.
How mean is fraud ! How base ingratitude !

Essex. Forbear reproach, thou injur'd majesty,
Nor wound, with piercing looks, a heart already
With anguish torn, and bleeding with remorse.
Your awful looks, alone, are arm'd with death,
And justice gives them terror.

Qu. Hapless man !

What cause could prompt, what fiend could urge thee
on

To this detested deed ? Could I from thee
Expect to meet this base return ? from thee,
To whom I ought to fly, with all the confidence
That giving bounty ever could inspire,
Or seeming gratitude and worth could promise ?

Essex. Alas ! I own my crimes, and feel my treasons ;

They press me down beneath the reach of pity.
Despair alone can shield me from myself.
Oh, let the little space I live be curs'd
With countless woes ; let death, unpitied, come ;
“ My name be mention'd, with the utmost scorn,”
If all my life can feel, or fame can suffer,
Can serve to mitigate my queen's displeasure.

Qu. My pride forbids me to approach thee more ;
My pity, rather, would relieve thy sorrow.

“ I see conviction, and severe remorse,
“ Within thy mind at work. But much I fear,
“ That death alone can calm the raging conflict.”

The people's clamours and my special safety,
Call loud for justice, and demand your life.

But if forgiveness from an injur'd queen
Can make the few short hours you live more easy,

I give it freely from my pitying heart;
And wish my willing power could grant thee more.

Essex. Oh, sounds angelic! goodness undeserv'd!
My swelling heart can keep no bounds, my soul
Flows o'er.—And will my gracious queen forgive
me?

Oh, let me prostrate thus before you fall,
My better angel; and my guardian genius!
Permit me, royal mistress, to announce
My faithful sentiments, my soul's true dictates;
Vouchsafe your Essex but this one request,
This only boon, he'll thank you with his last,
His dying breath, and bless you in his passage.

Qu. Rise, my lord.
If aught you have to offer can allay
Your woes, and reconcile you to your fate,
Proceed;—and I with patient ear will listen.

Essex. My real errors, and my seeming crimes
Would weary mercy, and make goodness poor:
And yet the source of all my greatest faults
Was loyalty misled, and duty in extreme.
So jealous was my sanguine heart, so warm
Affection's zeal, I could not bear the least
Suspicion of my duty to my queen.

This drove me from my high command in Ireland;
This too, impell'd me to that rude behaviour
Which justly urg'd the shameful blow I felt;
And this (O, fatal rashness!) made me think
My queen had given her Essex up, a victim
To statesmen's schemes, and wicked policy.
Stung by that piercing thought, my madness flew

Beyond all bounds, and now, alas ! has brought
me

To this most shameful fall ; and, what's still worse,
My own reproaches, and my queen's displeasure.

Qu. Unhappy man ! My yielding soul is touch'd,
And pity pleads thy cause within my breast.

Essex. Say but, my gracious sovereign, ere I go
For ever from your presence, that you think me
Guiltless of all attempts against your throne,
And sacred life. Your faithful Essex ne'er
Could harbour in his breast so foul a thought.
Believe it not, my queen. By Heav'n, I swear,
When in my highest pitch of glory rais'd,
The splendid noon of fortune's brightest sun-shine,
Not ages of renown could yield me half
The joy, nor make my life so greatly blest,
As saving yours, tho' for a single hour.

Qu. My lord, I think you honest. Nay, I own,
Whatever coldness I put on, was meant
To save you from the malice of your foes.
I judg'd your crimes, what you yourself pronounc'd
em,

The rash effect of an intemp'rate zeal.

Essex. Was ever wretch like Essex thus undone
By goodness in excess, and lavish'd grace !
Oh, I could tear my erring heart, with these
Revening hands !—What blessings have I lost !
What clemency abus'd !—Now could I wish
For lengthen'd life,—indeed for endless years.
A whole eternity's too short, to shew
My pious sorrows, and atone my folly.

Qu. " Too well the passage to my heart he finds ;
 " And pity's hand lets in the dangerous guest.
 " How weak is reason, when oppos'd to nature ! "

[*Aside.*
 My lord, I would convince you that I still
 Regard your life, and labour to preserve it ;
 But cannot screen you from a public trial.
 With prudence make your best defence ; but should
 Severity her iron jurisdiction
 Extend too far, and give thee up condemn'd
 To angry laws, thy queen will not forget thee.
 Yet, lest you then shou'd want a faithful friend,
 (For friends will fly you in the time of need)
 Here, from my finger, take this ring, a pledge
 Of mercy ; having this, you ne'er shall need
 An advocate with me ; for whensoever
 You give, or send it back, by Heav'n, I swear,
 As I do hope for mercy on my soul,
 That I will grant whatever boon you ask.

Essex. Oh, grace surprising ! most amazing goodness !

Words cannot paint the transports of my soul !
 Let me receive it on my grateful knees,
 At once to thank and bless the hand that gives it.

Qu. Depend, my lord, on this ; 'twixt you and
 me
 This ring shall be a private mark of faith

[*Gives the ring.*
 Iniolate. Be confident, cheer up,
 Dispel each melancholy fear, and trust
 Your sovereign's promise ; she will ne'er forsake
 you.

Essex. Let Providence dispose my lot as 'twill,
May watchful angels ever guard my queen ;
May healing wisdom in her counsels reign,
And firm fidelity surround her throne ;
May victory her dreaded banners bear,
And joyful conquests crown her soldier's brow ;
Let every bliss be mingled in her cup,
And Heaven at last become her great reward! *Exit.*

Qu. 'Tis done ;
And yet foreboding tremors shake my heart.
Something sits heavy here, and presses down
My spirits with its weight. What can it mean ?
Suppose he is condemn'd ; my royal word
Is plighted for his life ; his enemies,
No doubt, will censure much.—No matter ; let
I know him honest, and despise their malice.
“ Unhappy state, where mercy and compassion
“ Too often meet with clamour and reproach !
“ But princes must endure, for public good,
“ The narrow censures of misguiding crowds.”

Enter Countess of Rutland.

Rut. Where is the queen ? I'll fall before her
feet
Prostrate, implore, besiege her royal heart,
And force her to forgive.

Qu. What means this frenzy ?

Rut. Oh, gracious queen, if ever pity touch'd
Your generous breast, let not the cruel axe

Destroy his precious life; preserve my Essex,

" Preserve from shameful death, the noble, loyal,

" Oh, save the brave, the best of subjects.—Save."

My life, my hope, my joy, " my all," my husband!

Qu. Husband!—What sudden deadly blow is
this!

Hold up, my soul, nor sink beneath this wound.

You beg a traitor's life!

Rut. Oh, gracious queen!

He ever lov'd—was ever faithful, brave—

If nature dwells about your heart, Oh, spurn

Me not! My lord! my love! my husband bleeds!

Qu. Take her away.

Rut. " I cannot let you go.

" Hold off your hands"—Here on this spot I'll fix,

Here lose all sense. Still let me stretch these arms,

Inexorable queen! he yet may live.

Oh, give him to my poor afflicted heart!

One pitying look, to save me from distraction.

Qu. I'll hear no more. I'm tortur'd—take her
hence.

Rut. Nay, force me not away.—Inhuman
wretches!

Oh, mercy, mercy!—Then to thee, good Heav'n,

(My queen, my cruel queen, denies to hear me)

To thee I call, to thee for mercy bend.

Melt down her bosom's frozen sense to feel

Some portion of my deadly grief, my fell

Distraction.—Turn, Oh, turn, and see a wife,

A tortur'd wife—

Qu. Why am I not obey'd?

Rut. Nay, do not thus
Abandon me to fell despair. Just Heaven,
That sees my sorrows, will avenge the wrong,
This cruel wrong, this barbarous tyranny.

[*Forced off.*]

Qu. Wedded to Rutland ! Most unhappy pair !
And, Oh, ill-fated queen ! Never till now
Did sorrow settle in my heart its throne.
Now black despair its cloudy curtain draws
Around thy setting peace, where joy, alas !
No more shall dawn, nor smiling hope return.
Recall my pledge of safety from his hands,
And give him up to death !——But life or death
To me is equal now. “Distraction dwells
“Within my tortur’d soul, and furies rend it.”
Unhappy state, where peace shall never come !
One fatal moment has confirm’d my doom,
Turn’d all my comfort to intestine strife,
And fill’d with mortal pangs my future life. [*Exit.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter RALEIGH and Lieutenant of the Tower.

Raleigh.

THEIR peers, with much indulgence, heard their
pleas,
And gave them ample scope for their defence;
But nought avail'd, their crimes were too notorious.
They bore their sentence with becoming spirit;
And here's the royal mandate for their deaths.
The lady Nottingham!—What brings her hither?

Enter Lady NOTTINGHAM.

Not. Lieutenant, lead me to the Earl of Essex,
I bring a message to him from the queen.

Lieut. He's with his friend, the brave Southamp-
ton, madam,
Preparing now for his expected fate.
But I'll acquaint his lordship with your pleasure.

[*Exit.*

Ral. What means this message? Does the queen
relent?

Not. I fear she does: “for such a war of passi-
ons,

“Such varying tumults never strove within
“Her breast till now. Sometimes she rails at Essex,
“And calls him villain, traitor, dooms him dead;

" Yet, in a moment, turns again to pity.

" At length she sent me to th' ungrateful earl,

" To learn if he could offer aught that might

" Induce her royal mercy to forgiveness."

Go you to court, for Cecil there expects you.

I've promis'd to acquaint him with what passes

'Twixt me and Essex ere I see the queen.

Ral. Madam, I go.

[*Exit.*

Not. Now, vengeance, steel my heart!

Offended woman, whilst her pride remains,

To malice only and revenge will bow,

And every virtue at that altar sacrifice.

But see, he comes, with manly sorrow clad.

There was a time, that presence cou'd subdue

My pride, and melt my heart to gentle pity.

I then could find no joy but in his smiles;

And thought him lovely as the summer's bloom;

But all his beauties are now hateful grown.

Enter ESSEX.

Essex. Whether you bring me death or life I know
not.

But, if strict friendship and remembrance past

May aught presage to my afflicted heart,

Sure mercy only from those lips should flow,

And grace be utter'd from that friendly tongue.

Not. My lord, I'm glad you think me still your
friend.

I come not to upbraid but serve you now;

And pleas'd I am to be the messenger

Of such glad tidings, in the day of trouble,
As now I bring you. When the queen had heard
That by the lords you were condemn'd to die,
She sent me, in her mercy, here, to know
If you had aught to offer that might move
Her royal clemency to spare your life.

Essex. Could any circumstance new lustre add
To my dread sovereign's goodness, 'tis the making
The kind, the generous Nottingham its messenger.
Oh, madam! could my glowing heart express
Its grateful sentiments, 'twould speak such language
As angels utter, when they praise their Maker.

Not. 'Tis well, my lord; but there's no time to
spare,

The queen impatient waits for my return.

Essex. My heart was wishing for some faithful
friend,

And bounteous Heav'n hath sent thee to my hopes.
Know then, kind Nottingham, for now I'll trust
Thee with the dearest secret of my life;
'Tis not long since the queen (who well foresaw
To what the malice of my foes would drive me)
Gave me this ring, this sacred pledge of mercy;
And with it made a solemn vow to Heav'n,
That, whensoever I should give or send
It back again, she'd freely grant what'er
Request I then shou'd make.

Not. Give, give it me,
My lord, and let me fly on friendship's wings,
To bear it to the queen, and to it add
My prayers and influence to preserve thy life.

Essex. O ! take it then—it is the pledge of life,
The precious spring that drives my vital stream
Around, and keeps my heart still warm : “ it is
“ The door of breath, the hope of joy, the shield
“ Of friendship.”—O ! it is my dear Southampton’s
Last, last remaining stay, his thread of being,
Which more than words I prize.—O, take it then,
Take it, thou guardian angel of my life,
And offer up the incense of my prayer !
O beg, intreat, implore her majesty,
From public shame, and ignominious death,
And from th’ obdurate axe, to save my friend.

Not. My lord, with all the powers that nature
gave,
And friendship can inspire, I’ll urge the queen
To grant you your request.

Essex. Kind Nottingham,
Your pious offices shall ever be
My fervent theme ; and if my doubtful span
Relenting Heav’n should stretch to years remote,
Each passing hour shall still remind my thoughts,
And tell me that I owe my all to thee :
My friend shall thank you too for lengthen’d life.
And now I fly with comfort to his arms,
To let him know the mercy that you bring. [*Exit.*]

“ *Not.* Yes, you shall feel my friendship’s weight
fall heavy
“ Upon your guilty soul, ungrateful man !
“ Your false disdainful heart shall pay the fine
“ Of love neglected, and of beauty scorn’d.” [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

The Court. Enter QUEEN and BURLEIGH.

Qu. Ha! is not Nottingham return'd?

Bur. No, madam.

Qu. Dispatch a speedy messenger to haste her.
My agitated heart can find no rest.
So near the brink of fate—unhappy man!

Enter NOTTINGHAM.

How now, my Nottingham, what news from Essex?
What says the earl?

Not. I wish, with all my soul,
Th' ungrateful task had been another's lot.
I dread to tell it—lost, ill-fated man!

Qu. What means this mystery, this strange behaviour?

Pronounce—declare at once; what said the earl?

Not. Alas, my queen, I fear to say; his mind
Is in the strangest mood, that ever pride
On blackest thoughts begot. He scarce would
speak;

And when he did, it was with fullenness,
With hasty tone, and down-cast look.

Qu. Amazing!
Not feel the terrors of approaching death!
Nor yet the joyful dawn of promis'd life!

Not. He rather seem'd insensible to both,
And with a cold indifference heard your offer ;
Till warming up, by slow degrees, resentment
Began to swell his restless, haughty mind,
And proud disdain provok'd him to exclaim
Aloud, against the partial power of fortune,
And faction's rage. I begg'd him to consider
His sad condition, nor repulse with scorn
The only hand that could preserve him.

Qu. Ha !
What ! Said he nothing of a private import ?
No circumstance—no pledge—no ring ?

Not. None, madam,
But with contemptuous front disclaim'd at once
Your proffer'd grace ; and scorn'd, he said, a life
Upon such terms bestow'd.

Qu. Impossible !
Could Essex treat me thus ? You basely wrong him,
And wrest his meaning from the purpos'd point.
Recall betimes the horrid words you've utter'd ;
Confess, and own the whole you've said was false.

Not. Madam, by truth, and duty both compell'd
Against the pleadings of my pitying soul,
I must declare (Heav'n knows with what reluctance)
That never pride insulted mercy more.
He ran o'er all the dangers he had past ;
His mighty deeds ; his service to the state ;
Accus'd your majesty of partial leaning
To favourite lords, to whom he falls a sacrifice ;
Appeals to justice, and to future times,
How much he feels from proud oppression's arm :

Nay, something too he darkly hinted at,
Of jealous disappointment, and revenge.

Qu. Eternal silence seal thy venom'd lips!

What hast thou utter'd, wretch, to rouse at once
A whirlwind in my soul, which roots up pity,
And destroys my peace?

"Ha! he defies me then! Audacious traitor!"

Let him this instant to the block be led. [*Exit Not.*

Upbraid me with my fatal fondness for him!

Ungrateful, barbarous ruffian! Oh, Elizabeth!

Remember now thy long establish'd fame,

Thy envy'd glory, and thy father's spirit.

Accuse me of injustice too, and cruelty!

Yes, I'll this instant to the Tower, forget

My regal state, and to his face confront him:

Confound the audacious villain with my presence,

And add new terrors to th' uplifted axe. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Tower. Essex and SOUTHAMPTON discovered.

Essex. Oh, name it not! my friend shall live, he
shall;

I know her royal mercy, and her goodness,

Will give you back to life, to length of days,

And me to honour, loyalty, and truth.

Death is still distant far.

South. In life's first spring

Our green affections grew apace and prosper'd ;
The genial summer swell'd our joyful hearts,
To meet and mix each growing fruitful wish.
We're now embark'd upon that stormy flood
Where all the wise and brave are gone before us,
Ere since the birth of time, to meet eternity.
And what is death, did we consider right ?
Shall we, who sought him in the paths of terror,
And fac'd him in the dreadful walks of war,
Shall we astonish'd shrink, like frightened infants,
And start at scaffolds, and their gloomy trappings ?

Essex. Yet, still I trust long years remain of friendship.

Let smiling hope drive doubt and fear away,
And death be banish'd far ; where creeping age,
Disease, and care, invite him to their dwelling.
I feel assurance rise within my breast,
That all will yet be well.

South. Count not on hope—

We never can take leave, my friend, of life,
On nobler terms. Life ! what is life ? A shadow !
Its date is but th' immediate breath we draw ;
Nor have we surety for a second gale ;
Ten thousand accidents in ambush lie
For the embody'd dream.
A frail and fickle tenement it is,
Which, like the brittle glass that measures time,
Is often broke, ere half its sands are run.

Essex. Such cold philosophy the heart disdains,
And friendship shudders at the moral tale.

My friend, the fearful precipice is past,
And danger dare not meet us more. Fly swift,
Ye better angels, waft the welcome tidings
Of pardon to my friend ; of life and joy.

Enter Lieutenant.

Lieut. I grieve to be the messenger of woe,
But must, my lord, intreat you to prepare
For instant death. Here is the royal mandate
That orders your immediate execution.

Essex. Immediate execution !—What, so sudden !
No message from the queen, or Nottingham ?

Lieut. None, sir.

Essex. Deluded hopes ! Oh, worse than death !
Perfidious queen, to make a mock of life !
My friend, my friend destroy'd ! Oh ! piercing
thought !

Oh, dismal chance !—In my destruction ruin'd !
In my sad fall undone ! Why could not mine,
My life atone for both ; my blood appease ?
Can you, my friend, forgive me ?

South. Yes, O yes,
My bosom's better half, I can.—With thee,
I'll gladly seek the coast unknown, and leave
The lessening mark of irksome life behind.
With thee, my friend, 'tis joy to die ! 'tis glory !
For who would wait the tardy stroke of time,
Or cling, like reptiles, to the verge of being,
When we can bravely leap from life at once,
And spring triumphant in a friend's embrace ?

Enter RALEIGH.

Ral. To you, my lord Southampton, from the
queen

A pardon comes : your life her mercy spares.

Essex. For ever blest be that indulgent power
Which saves my friend ! This weight ta'en off, my
soul

Shall upward spring, and mingle with the blest.

South. All-ruling Heavens, can this, can this be
just ?

Support me ; hold, ye straining heart strings, hold,
And keep my sinking frame from dissolution.

Oh, 'tis too much for mortal strength to bear,
Or thought to suffer ! No, I'll die with thee.

They shall not part us, Essex.

Essex. Live, Oh, live,

Thou noblest, bravest, best of men and friends,

Whilst life is worth thy wish, 'till time and thou

Agree to part, and nature send thee to me ;

Thou gen'rous soul, farewell ! — Live, and be happy ;

And, Oh ! may life make largely up to thee

Whatever blessing fate has thus cut off

From thy departing friend !

Lieut. My lord, my warrant

Strictly forbids to grant a moment's time.

South. Oh, must we part for ever ? — Cruel for-
tune !

Wilt thou then tear him hence ? — "Severe divorce !"

Let me cling round thy sacred person still,
Still clasp thee to my bosom close, and keep
Stern fate at distance.

Essex. Oh, my friend, we'll meet
Again, where virtue finds a just reward,
Where factious malice never more can reach us.
Recall thy reason, be thyself once more.—
I fear it not.—This hideous monster, death,
When seen at distance, shocks weak nature's eye;
But reason, as it draws more near, defies it.—
I thank thy sorrows, but cou'd spare 'em now.
I need not bid thee guard my fame from wrongs:
And, Oh! a dearer treasure to thy care
I trust, than either life or fame—my wife!
Her bitter sorrows pierce my soul; for her
My heart drops blood!—Oh, she will want a friend!
Then take her to thy care; do thou pour balm
On her deep-wounded spirit, and let her find
My tender helps in thee.—I must be gone,
My ever faithful, and my gallant friend.—
I pr'ythee leave this woman's work.—Farewell!—
Take this last, dear embrace.—Farewell for ever!

South. My bursting breast! I fain would speak,
but words

Are poor—Farewell!—
But we shall meet again, embrace in one
Eternal band, which never shall be loos'd. [*Exit.*

Essex. To death's concluding stroke, lead on, Lieu-
tenant.

My wife!—Now reason, fortitude, support me!
For now indeed comes on my forest trial.

Enter Countess of Rutland.

Oh, thou last, dear reserve of fortune's malice !
For fate can add no more—Oh, com'st thou then
In this dread hour, when all my straining thoughts
Are struggling in the tenderest ties of nature !
Oh, com'st thou now t' arrest my parting soul,
And force it back to life !

Rut. Thou sole delight,
Thou only joy which life cou'd ever give,
Or death deprive me of; my wedded lord !
I come, with thee determin'd to endure
The utmost rigour of our angry stars ;
To join thee, fearless, in the grasp of death,
And seek some dwelling in a world beyond it.

Essex. Too much, thou partner of this dismal
hour,
Thy gen'rous soul would prompt thee to endure.
Nor can thy tender, trembling heart sustain it.
Long years of bliss remain in store for thee ;
And smiling time his treasures shall unfold
To bribe thy stay !

Rut. Thou cruel comforter !
Alas ! what's life, what's hated life to me :
“ Can aught beneath this starry hemisphere,
“ Which earth's extent, and nature's wealth can
yield,
“ Which proud ambition stretches to enjoy,
“ Or passion pants for, recompense thy loss ?”

Alas ! this universe, this goodly frame,
Shall all as one continued curse appear,
And every object blast, when thou art gone.

Essex. Oh, strain not thus the little strength I've
left,

The weak support that holds up life, to bear
A few short moments more, its weight of woe,
Its loss of thee. Oh, turn away those eyes,
Nor with that look melt down my fix'd resolve ;
And yet a little longer let me gaze
On that lov'd form. Alas ! I feel my sight
Grows dim, and reason from her throne retires ;
For pity's sake, let go my breaking heart,
And leave me to my fate.

Rut. Why wilt thou still
Of parting talk, since life its thousand gates
Unbars to let us through together ? " Death
" Is but a step that reaches to eternity."
Oh, that the friendly hand of Heav'n would snatch
Us both at once, above the distant stars,
Where fortune's venom'd shafts can never pierce,
Nor cruel queens destroy !—" Nay, look not so."

Essex. The awful Searcher, whose impartial eye
Explores the secrets of each human heart,
And every thought surveys, can witness for me,
How close thy image clings around my soul :
Retards each rising wish, and draws me back
To life, entangled by that lov'd idea.
When fell necessity those ties shall break,
For quickly break they must——when I from earth
On faith's white angel wings to Heaven shall soar,

Thy lasting form shall still my mind possess,
Where bliss supreme each faculty o'erwhelms,
And raptur'd angels glow.

Lieut. My lord, "the time

"Too far is stretch'd;" it now grows late.

Essex. Lead on.

Rut. Stay, stay, my love! my dearest; dying lord!
Ah, whither wouldst thou go? Ah, do not leave me!
Alas! I'll hasten to attend your flight;
And nature gives consent we should not part.
I feel each faculty for fate prepare,
And my quick soul wou'd fain set out before you.

"Oh, precious pangs!—Oh, dear distress! still
"closer

"To thy quick throbbing heart let mine complain,

"And on thy labouring bosom breathe my last!"

[*Faints.*

Essex. Thou sinking excellence! thou matchless
woman!

Shall fortune rob me of thy dear embrace,
Or earth's whole pow'r, or death divide us now!
Stay, stay, thou spotless, injur'd saint, and take——

Lieut. My lord, already you have been indulg'd
Beyond what I can warrant by my orders.

Essex. Oh, let me on her dying bosom fall,
Embrace her spotless form!—One moment more
Afford me to my sorrows——Oh, look there!
Cou'd bitter anguish pierce your heart, like mine,
You'd pity now the mortal pangs I feel,
The throbs that tear my vital strings away,
And rend my agonizing soul.

Lieut. My lord——

Essex. But one short moment, and I will attend.
Ye sacred ministers that virtue guard,
And shield the righteous in the paths of peril,
Restore her back to life, and lengthen'd years
Of joy; dry up her bleeding sorrows all!
Oh, cancel from her thoughts this dismal hour,
And blot my image from her sad remembrance!
'Tis done.——

And now, ye trembling cords of life, give way:
Nature and time, let go your hold; eternity
Demands me. *[Exeunt Essex and Lieutenant.]*

“ Woman. She returns to life; see! help!”

Rut. Where has my lost, benighted soul been wand-
d’ring?

What means this mist that hangs about my mind,
Through which reflection’s painful eye discerns
Imperfect forms, and horrid shapes of woe?
The cloud dispels, the shades withdraw, and all
My dreadful fate appears.—Oh, where’s my lord,
My life! my Essex! Oh, whither have they ta’en
him?

Enter QUEEN and Attendants.

Qs. To execution! Fly with light’ning’s wing,
And save him. “Ha! by whose command was
this?”

“Stop, stop the fatal blow.—My fears were true.”

[Exit one of the attendants.]

Rut. Thou saving angel, sent from Heav’n! my
queen,

My gracious queen, "be quick!—the bloody Burleigh!

"A moment may destroy him! Stretch thy arm,
"Defend, defend!" O, snatch him from the blow!
Preserve my husband! "O, Elizabeth,
"Look down upon me. Angels move her heart
"To pity; save him, save him, gracious queen!"

Qu. Be calm, he shall not die. Rise up. I came
To save his life.

Rut. 'Tis mercy's voice that speaks.

My Essex shall again be mine. My queen,
My bounteous, gracious queen, has said the word.
May troops of angels guard thy sacred life,
And, in thy latest moments, waft thy soul
To meet that mercy in the realms of joy,
Which now thy royal goodness grants to me!

Enter BURLEIGH.

Bur. Madam, your orders came, alas! too late.
Ere they arriv'd the axe had fallen on Essex.

Rut. Ha! dead! What hell is this that opens
round me?

What fiend art thou that draws the horrid scene?
Ah, Burleigh! bloody murd'rer, where's my husband!

"Oh! where's my lord, my Essex?"
Destruction seize and madness rend my brain!
See, see, they bend him to the fatal block;
Now, now the horrid axe is lifted high,
It falls, it falls; he bleeds, he bleeds; he dies!

Qu. Alas, her sorrows pierce my suffering heart.

Rut. Eternal discord, tear the social world,

“And nature’s laws dissolve! expunge, erase

“The hated marks of time’s engraving hand,

“And every trace destroy!” Arise, despair,

“Assert thy rightful claim,” possess me all!

Bear, bear me to my murder’d lord, to clasp

His bleeding body in my dying arms,

And in the tomb embrace his dear remains,

And mingle with his dust for ever. *[Exit.*

Qu. Hapless woman!

She shall henceforth be partner of my sorrows;

And we’ll contend who most shall weep for Essex.

Oh, quick to kill, and ready to destroy, *[To Bur.*

Cou’d no pretext be found, no cause appear,

To lengthen mercy out a moment more,

And stretch the span of grace? Oh, cruel Burleigh!

This, this was thy dark work, unpitying man!

Bur. My gracious mistress, blame not thus my
duty.

My firm obedience to your high command.

The laws condemn’d him first to die; nor think

I stood between your mercy and his life.

It was the lady Nottingham, not I.

Herself confess’d it all in wild despair,

That from your majesty to Essex sent,

With terms of proffer’d grace, she then receiv’d.

From his own hand a fatal ring, a pledge

It seems of much importance, which the earl

With earnest suit, and warm entreaty begg’d her.

As she would prize his life, to give your majesty.

In this she fail’d—In this she murder’d Essex.

Qu. Oh, barbarous woman !
Surrounded still by treachery and fraud !
“ What bloody deed is this ! Thou injur’d Essex ! ”
My fame is soil’d to all succeeding times :
But Heav’n alone can view my breaking heart ;
Then let its will be done. —

From hence, let proud, resisting mortals know
The arm parental, and the indulgent blow
To Heaven’s corrective rod submissive bend ;
Adore its wisdom, on its power depend ;
Whilst ruling justice guides eternal sway,
Let nature tremble, and let man obey.

EPILOGUE.

BY AN UNKNOWN HAND.

Spoken originally by Mrs. CIBBER.

NEWS! *News! good folks, rare news, and you shall know it.—*

I've got intelligence about our poet.

Who do you think he is?—You'll never guess;

An Irish Bricklayer, neither more nor less.

And now the secret's out, you cannot wonder,

That in commencing bard he made a blunder.

Has he not left the better for the worse,

In quitting solid brick for empty verse?

Can he believe th' example of Old Ben,

Who chang'd, like him, the trowel for the pen,

Will in his favour move your critic bowels?—

You rather wish, most poets pens were trowels.

One man is honest, sensible, and plain,

Nor has the poet made him pert in vain:

No beau, no courtier, nor conceited youth;

But then so rude, he always speaks the truth:

I told him he must flatter, learn address,

And gain the heart of some rich patroness:

'Tis she, said I, your labours will reward,

If you but join the bricklayer with the bard;

As thus——Should she be old and worse for wear,

You must new-case her, front her, and repair;



EPILOGUE.

*If crack'd in fame, as scarce to bear a touch,
You cannot use your trowel then too much ;
In short, whate'er her morals, age, or station,
Plaster and white-wash in your dedication.
Thus I advis'd—but he detests the plan :
What can be done with such a simple man ?
A poet's nothing worth and nought availing,
Unless he'll furnish where there is a failing.
Authors in these good times are made and us'd,
To grant these favours nature has refus'd.
If he won't fib, what bounty can he crave ?
We pay for what we want, not what we have.——
Nay, tho' of ev'ry blessing we have store,
Our sex will always wish——a little more.——
If he'll not bend his heart to this his duty,
And sell, to who will buy, wit, honour, beauty
The bricklayer still for him the proper trade is,
Too rough to deal with gentlemen and ladies.——
In short, they'll all avoid him, and neglect him,
Unless that you, his patrons, will protect him.*

THE END.



